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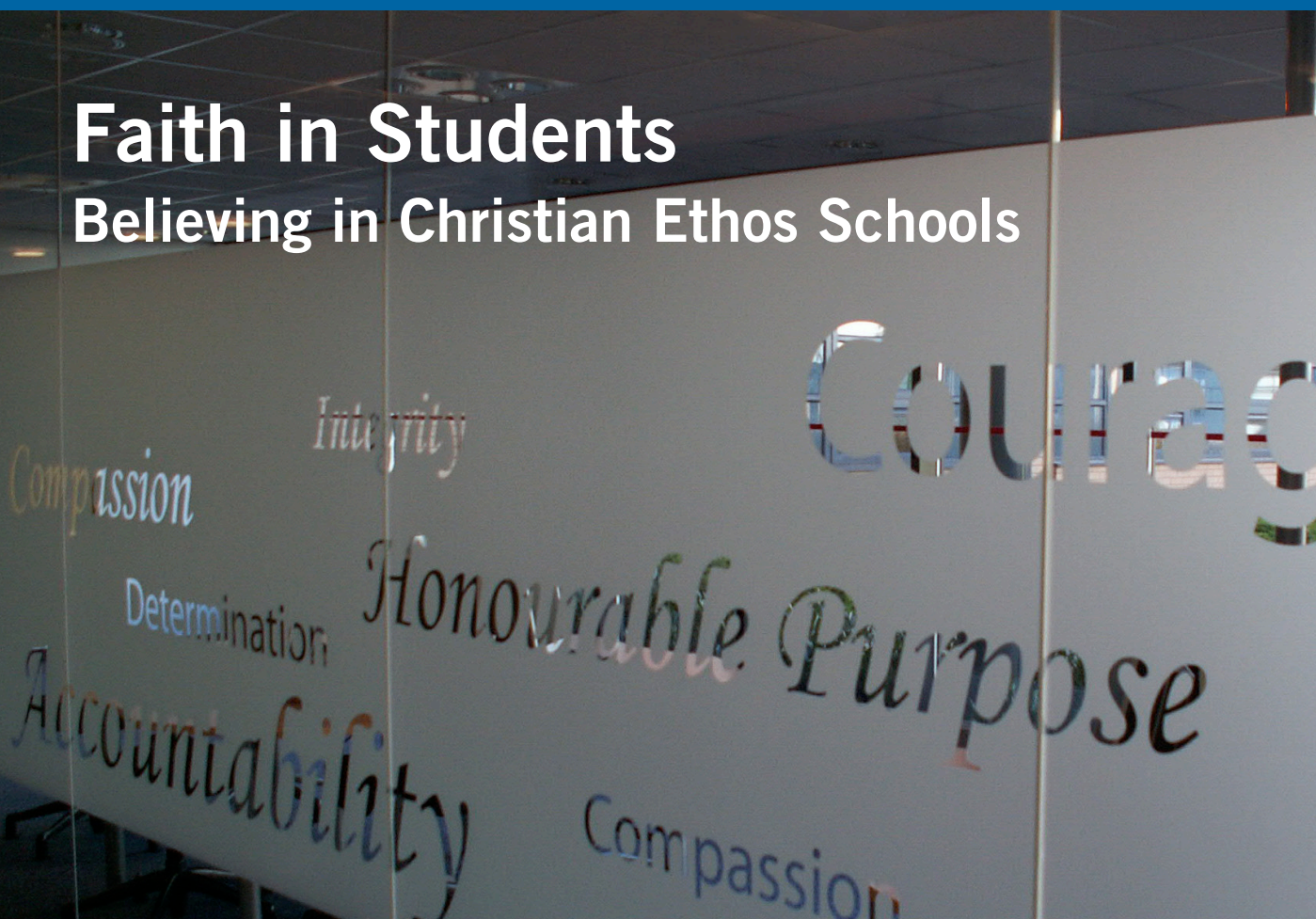
FACULTY OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LAW



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Faith in Students

Believing in Christian Ethos Schools



**A Report on the ESRC/AHRC Religion and Society
Programme Research Project AH/F007981/1
Religious Reading in a Secular Society:
Learning for Life in a Liberal Democracy**

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**Arts & Humanities
Research Council**



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Overview of the Research Project

Aim

This research project investigated the education of 14-year-olds in five schools with a Christian identity in order to evaluate how well they were prepared for life, work and citizenship in a secular liberal democracy.

Focus

The culture, ethos, aims and identity of each school was evaluated and reading in the arts and humanities was investigated as these value-laden subjects are central to children's education as citizens. The main case study school, Trinity Academy in Yorkshire (sponsored by the Emmanuel Schools Foundation) was designated the 'Most Improved Academy in England' during the project. The significance of this school's Christian ethos was explored in relation to its transformation. Four other Christian-ethos schools (inside and outside the English state sector) were studied to provide a broader context.

Policy Relevance

This research is especially relevant at the present time as the number of schools with Christian foundations receiving public funding in England is growing rapidly. At the time of this research, a third of all academies were sponsored by Christian organizations. Key issues addressed by this research concern how well Christian-ethos schools might contribute to a cohesive society and promote tolerance, the role of private sponsorship and the degree to which the liberal state should support schooling with a Christian foundation.

Research Methods

An ethnographic, qualitative case study of Trinity Academy was undertaken over the equivalent of three weeks during 2007-8 and data was also collected in other Christian-ethos schools (The King's Academy in Middlesbrough, Emmanuel College in Gateshead, Bradford Christian School in Bradford and Jacobus Fruytier College in Apeldoorn in the Netherlands). Methods comprised analysis of schools' aims and core values; semi-structured interviews with school leaders, teachers and 14-year-old students; lesson observation including extensive recording, transcription and analysis of situated classroom discourse. Initial findings informed construction of a short quantitative survey of around a thousand participants (teachers and 14-year-old students) in the schools.

Dissemination

A one-day conference 'Faith in the Academy' reporting findings from the three schools belonging to the Emmanuel Schools Foundation was held at the University of Leeds in October 2008. Findings were also presented at seminars and conferences in the UK and USA. This report as well as further journal articles and conference papers continue the dissemination process.

Funding

The UK's ESRC/AHRC Religion and Society Programme and the School of Education at the University of Leeds funded the research project, the full economic cost of which was £52,595 (80% awarded by the ESRC/AHRC).

Research Methods

In the interests of clarity technical terms have been kept to a minimum in this report as it is intended to communicate research findings to a wide audience. Put simply, both words and numbers can help us to understand education and schooling. Quantitative methods such as surveys (that produce numbers) and qualitative methods such as interviews (that produce words) can both be useful but give different sorts of insights. For instance, knowing that 82% of 14-year-old students at schools sponsored by the Emmanuel Schools Foundation 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement 'I think this school is very good' can be helpful but we also need to know why so many students thought their school was very good and which aspects of it they appreciated.

This is important because if action is to be taken to bring about improvement in a school, the attitudes, beliefs and motivations of the students and teachers within it need to be understood. Interviewing people and listening to them explain why they do what they do or why they believe what they believe is vital if we are to understand a school. What is more, unless such techniques as interviews, focus groups or observations are used, we can ask the wrong questions in a survey: researchers can ask the questions they thought were important (before they visited a school) rather than the questions that they find need to be asked (once they have spent some time in a school). We do need to know how widely held views are and therefore, in this research, after interviews, focus groups and lesson observations, a survey (in which participants' own statements were used) was administered. Investigation focused on five areas:

1. School Aims: Values and Religious Foundations
2. Teaching Texts: Policy, Pedagogy and Practice
3. Training Teachers: Faith-based Education
4. Readers' Responses: Shaping Beliefs and Values?
5. Young Citizens: Policy Significance

An ethnographic, qualitative case study of Trinity Academy was undertaken over the equivalent of three weeks during 2007-8. Two or three days were also spent in each of four other Christian-ethos schools in order to place Trinity Academy in context. Methods were as follows: thematic, content analysis of schools' aims, mission statements and core values; semi-structured interviews with school leaders, teachers of English and the humanities and 14-year-old students regarding their beliefs, experiences and views of school; lesson observation including extensive recording, transcription and analysis of situated classroom discourse. Initial findings emerged from a thematic analysis of transcribed talk and these informed construction of a short quantitative survey of around a thousand participants (leaders, teachers and 14-year-old students) administered in the five schools studied. Findings from this survey can be found at the end of this report and findings from interviews, focus groups and observations in each school appear throughout this report; it is best to read them together.

Introduction: Religious ‘Reading’ in a Secular Society

Reading Words and World

This research proceeded on the assumption that young people ‘read’ far more than words in school: they learn to read the world. The term ‘reading’ is used broadly here and does not refer to phonics or literacy but to interpretation and meaning. Living and interpreting go together. In our society ‘we have a moral duty to read’ and ‘as teachers, a moral duty to teach reading’ because ‘learning to read opens significant additional possibilities in terms of understanding how we might live’ (Harrison, 2004, p.6). How then can our schools discharge their moral responsibility to teach such ‘reading’?

Reading Literature and Life

The research reported here investigated how young people interpret and respond to beliefs and values in both literature and life as they need to be discerning readers of both if they are to make their own good choices. It has been argued that ‘the main legacy of modern liberalism’ is that ‘many if not most citizens of contemporary liberal democracies cannot take religious stories and narratives seriously, because they cannot take any non-literal forms of literature seriously as sources of moral or other practical wisdom and illumination’ (Carr, 2004, p. 391). Certainly, the relevance of such texts does not always appear to be appreciated by teenagers, saturated in early twenty-first century culture. In this research, special attention was devoted to students’ responses to a wide range of value-laden texts in History, Religious Education and English.

Reading School and Society

Students also ‘read’ their school’s expectations and priorities, its aims and mission, its vision and values. Young people read and respond to their school’s faith, what it believes about them, what it believes they are capable of achieving and what it believes about their place in the world. A school’s assemblies, ethos, approach to pastoral care as well as its attitude to success and failure are all interpreted, and responded to, by students. The school curriculum and culture (be it hidden or declared, religious or secular) can be seen as a ‘text’ that young people read. This report therefore documents young people’s reading of, and responses to, their Christian-ethos schools.

Any reading of words and world or literature and life that takes place in school needs to be seen against the backdrop of an increasingly secular society with its ubiquitous media messages and influential youth culture. Secularization is not just about what young people do not do anymore (attending church, for instance), it is about how they do not think anymore, and thinking is very much what education and schooling is all about. This research explored the ways of ‘reading’ and thinking about the world (as well as the ways of living in it) that are available to young people educated in schools with a distinct Christian identity located within an increasingly secular society.

Indoctrination and Autonomy in Society and School

If it is the case that 'religious adherence is one of the most 'uncool' social activities one could imagine, especially for the young' (Copley, 2005, p. xiii), then one might argue that young people were well on the way to being indoctrinated *against* religion. Certainly, the possibility of secular indoctrination needs to be taken seriously:

If we were being indoctrinated now, at this very minute, would we know? What if it were a rather pleasant or at least imperceptible experience, unlike the stereotypes of indoctrination in George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four or the state machine in Nazi Germany or the techniques of North Korea? If such indoctrination were happening, would it be more likely to be religious indoctrination or secular indoctrination? In other words, are we more likely in today's society to be indoctrinated into religion, or out of it?

(Copley, 2005, p.xi)

If secularization in our culture stops many young people thinking about religious truth claims there are important implications for schooling. For most people, 'indoctrination' is a pejorative term that conjures up strongly negative associations but, taken literally, to indoctrinate is simply to lead into a doctrine, a teaching or a belief. In this sense, anyone who teaches children to have an unshakeable commitment to tolerance, for instance, could be regarded as indoctrinating them.

In a secular society, autonomy is often considered to be making one's own decisions or moral choices independently of tradition or religious influences but in what ways can anyone be said to be thinking for themselves or thinking independently when they live in a culture that influences the way they think? If 'he who does anything because it is the custom makes no choice' (John Stuart Mill, 1909) then religious beliefs or secular liberal beliefs that are taken for granted, can be dangerous.

Autonomy has been challenged recently as an educational aim because even adults do not exercise autonomy in every situation they encounter in life for 'there are experts on hand to guide us if we have the humility and good sense to let them' (Hand, 2006, p. 538). What is important is that schools come clean about the beliefs and values underpinning such guidance. If allegiances and worldviews are declared, children are more likely to be able to make up their own minds about what they are told. Schools with a pervasive secular or liberal ethos are not a neutral alternative to schools with a distinctly religious one:

The same arguments against nurturing religious beliefs and attitudes would be similar to those which would be levelled against teaching a particular moral code or attitude...Indoctrination arises as much from the secular assumptions of the media and the cold indifference to religion of the humanist

(Pring, 2005, p. 58-9).

All Schools are 'Faith Schools'

Schools seek to change children. The issue is not so much *whether* schools teach children what to believe but *how* they do so and *what* children learn. The term 'faith schools' is a misnomer because *all schools are faith schools*. Schooling always provides answers to 'religious' questions because it tackles issues of origin, purpose, truth, value and destiny. Schooling is an ideological intervention in children's lives. Schools and teachers always believe in *something*, they are not worldview-neutral for schooling is an inherently value-laden activity.

Education in a secular school is often assumed to be neutral but such schools generally perpetuate assumptions and beliefs that are secular, liberal and humanist in orientation. A Canadian researcher, who is highly critical of Christian schools, has observed that indoctrination 'is not uncommon in public schools' (Peshkin, 1986, p. 284) and although people in a secular environment might assume that children's freedom is limited by those who provide them with religious nurture, it is also the case that:

children's responses and judgments can be limited as much by their encountering teachers with anti-religious views and school policies which assume a secularist view of religion or are insensitive to families from religious backgrounds as by encounters with teachers holding religious views
(Jackson, 2003, p. 96).

We should not, however, assume that all faith schools will be equally good for children and young people. One of the problems with the 'faith schools' debate is that it is insufficiently discriminating and can obscure the differences between schools. While the *principle* of Christian-ethos schooling is defended here, schools (and practices within them) should be carefully evaluated. We must acknowledge, however, that a secular perspective is not somehow more 'neutral' than a faith-based one.

Arguably, communicating a Christian perspective on a moral or ethical issue inside the classroom is entirely justifiable, especially in a school that has a Christian foundation although 'faith-related perspectives will have the most bearing' upon topics that 'address the larger significance and meaning of humans in relation to each other and the universe' (Marsden, 1997, p. 63). Clearly arts and humanities lessons will not be short of such topics. It has been suggested that some Christian-ethos schools see subjects and topics as 'examples of God's creation, humanity's fall and redemption' and that this is the 'superimposition of one master viewpoint on all' (Walford, 2002, p. 416) but there is, of course, always a viewpoint that is a starting point. Whether secular schools engage in the 'superimposition' of a 'master viewpoint' should be considered, especially if they promote the sort of liberalism that can be seen as 'a divisive secular analogue to religious faith' (Rawls, 1993, pp. 37-38).

Christian-Ethos Schools: From Service to Nurture

Some, but by no means all, Christian-ethos schools encourage teachers to ask 'questions about what a Christian pedagogy and curriculum might be' (Walford, 2002, p. 413). Indeed, even in Christian-ethos schools committed to the 'integration of faith and learning' (Glanzer, 2008) not all teachers find it easy to conceptualize distinctively 'Christian education' because in a largely secular educational environment 'education is education' (Hull, 2002, p. 80). As we might expect there are significant differences between schools and the priority given to 'faith-learning integration' is one such difference. How then can these schools be classified and described?

An attempt has been made to classify faith or cultural identity schools as either 'moderate' or 'strong' (McDonough, 1998) and a characteristic of a 'strong' faith school, according to this definition, is that it 'denies a division between the sacred and the secular' (Burtonwood, 2006, p. 80). The degree to which the schools described in this report fit the 'moderate-strong' typology is taken up later in this report and is important because many commentators believe that the liberal state can often support 'moderate' schools but cannot support 'strong' identity schools. One conclusion reached in this research is that the schools in this study did not fit the 'moderate-strong' typology. Consequently, determining state support for schools on the basis of such a typology does a disservice to the schools and society by failing to understand the relation between critical thinking, autonomy and faith.

A more helpful way of differentiating between schools, familiar from the *The Fourth R* (Durham, 1970), is to see them as providing primarily 'nurture' or 'service'. Emmanuel College (EL), The King's Academy (KS) and Trinity Academy (TY) can be seen as 'service' schools as they primarily seek to serve local communities, often in areas of relative socio-economic disadvantage. The mission of the schools is to significantly raise educational standards and to improve the opportunities for young people in these communities. This is a different mission to that of either Jacobus Fruytier College (JF) or Bradford Christian School (BCS) which were both founded by Christian parents, dissatisfied with the prevailing secularism of education, who wanted the Christian nurture at home to be congruent with that provided at school.

The order in which the schools in this report are presented is significant. The report begins by describing 'service' schools and ends by describing 'nurture' schools. From interviews with founders, sponsors, principals, vice-principals, students, teachers and parents, and also from analysis of lessons, documentation and survey data, I seek first of all to draw conclusions regarding the aims and identity of each of the schools. Following this, reading in the arts and humanities at each school is considered. Finally, some of the issues raised in this introduction are revisited and considered in the light of the data from each school.

The Emmanuel Schools Foundation: Aims and Identity

The Emmanuel Schools Foundation (ESF) aims to provide 'centres of academic excellence where staff and students have the opportunity to achieve their personal best' (ESF website) and has so far sponsored four schools in England. Beginning with Emmanuel College in 1990, the Foundation has sponsored The King's Academy in Middlesbrough, which opened in 2003, Trinity Academy in Thorne near Doncaster, which opened in 2005 and Bede Academy in Blyth, Northumberland, open from September 2009. The Emmanuel Schools Foundation believes that 'economic regeneration, prosperity in the North East and full and satisfying lives can be achieved by the development of the able young people within Foundation Schools' (ESF website).

The mission statement and core values of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation (ESF) are printed on a card that students receive and this is reproduced on page 24 of this report. The ESF states that the ethos of the schools it sponsors is based on a 'traditional Christian faith' and believes 'that every child, irrespective of gender, race, or social background, is made in the image of God and has inherent worth'; its schools are therefore 'non-selective' and 'open to children of all faiths and none' (ESF website). The Emmanuel Schools Foundation is 'committed to providing a well rounded education in which all children have the opportunity to realise their full potential as human beings - intellectually, socially, physically, spiritually and morally' (ESF website). The ESF is quite specific about its Christian ethos and states:

The Christian Ethos of our schools will mean we:

- Positively value every person attending, working in or associated with schools
- Support, encourage and reward people in our schools
- Have high expectations of people and promote the pursuit of personal best
- Promote grace, gentleness and kindness within each school
- Encourage all to look to the interests of others as well as their own
- Love others as we would love ourselves
- Develop an appreciation of the importance of serving others
- Act fairly, and in a spirit of mutual respect and humility
- Promote a spirit of joy, excitement and thankfulness in all that we do
- Present the Christian faith not just in intellectual terms but as a living faith with the ability to affect our individual and corporate lives for good.

(ESF website)

High levels of motivation, a strong work ethic and a belief that young people of all backgrounds have the potential to achieve success characterize the Emmanuel Schools Foundation. This commitment is strongly influenced by the Chairman of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation, Sir Peter Vardy, who built Vardy Group PLC into the most profitable independent car retailer in Europe.

Sponsoring Excellence

Three interviews with Sir Peter Vardy over the course of the research project, (ranging from half an hour to two hours in length) revealed his passion for excellence and his commitment to improving opportunities for young people. This drive and determination appears to have twin sources: commercial experience from the family business he built up into such a successful PLC and what he sees as traditional Christian values (such as honesty, compassion, determination and accountability). Sir Peter Vardy explained his commitment to excellence:

We had dealerships from Aberdeen to Reading and represented most of the car manufacturers from Rolls Royce, Ferrari, Aston Martin right through to the specialists, through the volume cars of Ford, Vauxhall and Fiats and Citroens and everything else. So we built that up and it was almost £2bn turnover
(October 21st 2008)

I suppose it's a family thing. Whatever we put our hands to we want to be the best in the world. You know I developed a car dealership group that was acknowledged to be the best motor group in the world. We had the best systems, the best processes, the best people, the best results, and I sold it because we got to 100 dealerships and 6,000 people and I felt that I couldn't actually effect the passion for excellence beyond that number of people.
(July 11th 2008)

Sir Peter Vardy's passion for excellence and proven ability to turn round failing businesses inform his approach to schools and his aspirations for the people who work with him:

I want them to get out of bed early and want to do things better than they did it yesterday. Everything has to be a forward movement of pursuing excellence, getting better and better and better...
(July 11th 2008)

Envisioning people so they believe that dramatic improvement will be achieved rapidly is seen as an essential element of success:

What I found when I was building dealerships is I would take over a failing dealership and I would turn the dealership round... what I had to do was get the people to believe in the vision, and the vision was 'We've been selling 25 cars, I want you to sell 150 a month' so it's a big change. So what did we do to change that? Right well we got them to believe in a vision and believe that they could do it, and obviously I've built up to 100 dealerships and so "He's done it everywhere else, he'll do it" ... And in the first month we moved from selling 25 cars to 120 cars. But the biggest thing was I gave them cars that people wanted to buy.
(July 11th 2008)

Customer satisfaction is seen here as central to success and Sir Peter went on to draw the comparison with schooling, explaining his original motivation for investing in schools during the late 1980s:

I thought well if we could translate some of the business practices of turning round failing companies into turning round failing schools then that was what Margaret Thatcher and Kenneth Baker were wanting. They saw that if we could create beacons of excellence then other schools would benefit, everyone in the region would benefit.

(July 11th 2008)

Some months later when discussing the similarities between businesses and schools, I asked Sir Peter Vardy who the 'customers' in schools were and he explained:

Well the parents to a certain extent, the government to a certain extent because the government are paying the bills, they are paying, alright the sponsorship goes into it at the beginning but from a sponsor's point of view this is the best deal on the go, we put £2m in and the government puts £25m in and the government pay the running costs of the school from thereon in ... but the parents are the other ones, we are educating their children, they need to see that we are doing our best. And to a certain extent the students are the customers. That's a little bit different from the car business where the customer is the one that buys the car, but we have to satisfy a lot of people in the process.

(October 21st 2008)

At Emmanuel College, the first school sponsored by Sir Peter Vardy (where a genuinely comprehensive intake of students achieve some of the best GCSE results in the country) customers are clearly very satisfied. Even so, the question for Sir Peter Vardy is still how further improvement can be made:

And it's just constantly pursuing excellence ...you know, we did this in the car business and in all the training sessions that we had, we had to get them to have a vision... What is there we will learn from folks that are doing better than us? And there's a tendency here [the interview took place at Emmanuel College] to think "Well we're doing well, we've had 4 or 5 outstanding OFSTED reports" and I'm saying "Jonathan [the Principal], what do we do to get us beyond outstanding?" and Jonathan said, "Well there's only you could ask that one".

(July 11th 2008)

When I asked a manager in one of the schools 'about the difference that it makes having a business sponsor' the response was:

I think probably one of the biggest differences that it makes is an emphasis on excellence in relation to high expectations being placed upon the school in terms of standards ...

During interviews with different people throughout the course of the year in different locations, the name 'Sir Peter Vardy' was invariably associated with 'excellence' and 'high expectations'. It comes as no surprise that Trinity Academy (which the ESF opened in 2005) should be the most improved school in Yorkshire and Humberside and the most improved academy in England with results improving from 34% to 74% (5+ A*-C at GCSE) over just 3 years. Transforming complex organizations is Sir Peter Vardy's trademark, although he is keen to point out he 'simply brought the basics of business to bear in turning round a failing school' and he acknowledges he is not an educator:

We've got 4 schools and I haven't been involved in the education bit because I'm not a teacher so it's no use me coming in and telling them how to teach English, you know, that isn't what it's about... In the pursuit for excellence in the schools at the moment I'm saying; 'How do we get an average teacher to be a good teacher? How do we get a good teacher to be an outstanding teacher?'
(July 11th 2008)

For Sir Peter Vardy, the *pace* of improvement is important when it comes to a child's education and he is impatient with state bureaucracy and frustrated with the time it can take an LEA (Local Education Authority) to make decisions:

I think business people getting involved and supporting outstanding educationalists can achieve great things, and they can achieve greater things than being in the melee of local authority politics and everything else that goes on, and the slowness of how that moves. I think in business we work to much shorter timescales. You know, we'd take a business over and we'd want movement and action very, very quickly. I find that working with local authorities... it can take five years to get the agreement to build ... it will take another two years to build it, so it could be seven years in the process before you see the first children coming into the school. You couldn't run a business like that, you'd be absolutely bankrupt. You know, we need to work to much shorter deadlines, be more demanding on movement, action and results in business, and that's obviously what we are used to. We are used to buying failing businesses and turning them around very quickly.
(October 21st 2008)

The vision is not simply to improve individual schools but to improve education in a whole area by setting standards that others will follow:

The vision that we had was that we would build seven schools and have 10,000 children... Gateshead was near the bottom of the local authority league table in 1990 when the league tables were produced then. I don't know whether it was fourth off bottom or fifth off bottom. In 2006 it was sixth off top. So what had happened in Emmanuel was exactly what Margaret Thatcher and Kenneth Baker wanted. They wanted to have beacons of excellence that the other schools would see what could be done, what could be achieved
(July 11th 2008)

To see young people prepared for the world of work and to make a positive contribution to their society is key to understanding Sir Peter Vardy's motivation for sponsoring schools:

As an employer I had seen children coming out of school not being able to spell, not being able to add up, and the education system at that time was failing the children of the North East. And as a major employer and involved in business and the community in the North East this was a real problem to all the employers. So to try and do something was a real opportunity.
(October 21st 2008)

Another key motivator for involvement in schools is Sir Peter Vardy's Christian faith and the importance he places upon character and values in young people's education. Although he is keen to stress that a school 'is not an indoctrination centre' he does believe that what he terms 'Christian values' are good principles for living whether or not one is a Christian:

If you don't believe in the Christian faith as we do they're still the basic principles for living and nobody would argue with the principles we're talking about... Christians have a social responsibility, you know, Jesus told us to feed the hungry, look after the poor, look after the sick and get in among and do what we are able to do. And I didn't think I was going to get involved in education, you know, as I was selling cars. But the opportunity came, the challenge came and I thought "Well maybe I should try and make it happen"
(July 11th 2008)

The Emmanuel Schools Foundation has been hindered by accusations that it is 'creationist' which is roundly denied by Sir Peter Vardy who explained that he is portrayed as a 'creationist, fundamentalist, evangelist, car salesman' by certain sections of the media. It is not difficult to see why those who believe that education should be entirely secular or are against the business sponsorship of schools (preferring them to be in LEA control) might want to discredit an organization that is committed to establishing schools with both business sponsorship and a Christian ethos. Sir Peter Vardy's position is simply that he believes God 'made man in his own image and we are all made in the image of God' which is nothing other than the traditional Christian 'doctrine of man' shared by Christians worldwide. The conviction that people are 'made in the image of God' is pertinent to this study because it accounts for the commitment to high expectations and aspirations. It is a theme elaborated upon by the Principal of Emmanuel College, Jonathan Winch:

Another advantage [of having a Christian ethos] would be a very strong sense that every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image. And that being the case, they're uniquely gifted. ... What follows directly from the belief that human beings are created, by God in His image, is that it must be wrong to make excuses for children. Now I personally think that educationalists have created a whole industry of excuse making. We like to label children and to find excuses for their underachievement... their family background, their socio-economic circumstances, and all of these then become reasons why we can't achieve very much with this

group of children...Not that we don't believe that these play a part in shaping the child, because we do... but these things must not provide an excuse for low expectations, low aspirations. If a child comes from a family where there's no history of further education...they may be just as intelligent as the child of somebody educated at Oxford University. And it's our responsibility to dream big dreams for those children and to help lift their aspirations ...what follows directly from the belief that human beings are created by God in His image is that it must be wrong to make excuses for children.

Sir Peter Vardy freely acknowledges that Christian commitments underpin both his sponsorship of schools and his business success:

Well if you look at the business and how we built it up, and you look at when we sold it, we sold it at the peak of the market, now if that wasn't God looking after me I don't know what it was. So I feel that I've had his hand on my shoulder all the time while I was building the business up. As a Christian myself I feel a responsibility to help others and to put something back, and there are a whole range of things that we could do but education is so important to give the children the best possible start in life. You know, the Christians of old have looked after a lot of the education that's been done, feeding the hungry, looking after the poor, all of the things that the Lord commanded us to get involved with. So when the opportunity came to get involved with education I thought "Well that's a wonderful thing, what would Jesus do if he had the money that I've got" and he'd probably start with the children and educate the kids. And I felt that the Lord opened the door and I just walked through and got involved with this, it seemed a very unlikely thing for me to be involved with, it still is an unlikely thing to be involved with, I've got the business background but I haven't got the education background. But what we've done is to find outstanding educational guys to run the schools, and David and I who built the schools and supply everything want to provide them with the best possible resources, the best buildings, the best kit and the best everything so that they can deliver the education. But so far it's worked extremely well and we hope that we'll be able to build more.

Building Excellence

When I interviewed David Vardy at the Vardy Group headquarters in Durham it was apparent that the Christian commitment to excellence was even reflected in the school buildings of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation:

I'm the brother of Sir Peter Vardy who is the sponsor of the schools and the instigator of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation. My responsibility within the Foundation is to take the projects from conception through to reality... I've been responsible for building the three schools that we've got at the moment and I am looking after the building of the Bede Academy in Blyth which we've just commenced on site and will be completed by September 2009... There is a really strong desire to make the buildings both fit for purpose and create the difference that the new school requires so we provide them all with their first set of uniform so that every student has to turn up on the first day of the new Academy pristine in the brand new uniform, the ties the regulation length, the shirt buttons fastened and so on and that in itself with the new building makes a difference from what they were previously accustomed to. So the building is important... but it is only part of what is a very, very complicated process.

The design of the new school buildings reflects the core values and commitments of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation. Accountability and openness are key themes reflected in the design and architecture of the schools:

The windows into the classrooms from the corridors are deliberate so that the Principal and the senior staff walking in the corridors can see into every room, it gives reassurance to the teachers that they're being supported, it lets the students know that they're being watched and therefore have got to be on their best behaviour...it does mean that there is, as you describe it, high visibility around the building, that this is a place of work and high standards are expected both of performance and of behaviour.

The buildings, like the schooling that takes place in them, are designed to prepare young people for the world of work and to model respect and high standards:

We expect high standards of behaviour and the students respect that. There is respect for their surroundings, we are very fastidious about the maintenance of the building for cleaning and for repairs and renewals and so on and right in the early days when the Emmanuel building was being completed people thought it was a corporate headquarters and, you know, carpet on the floors and this sort of thing. We said, "Well this is the environment in which these young people are going to work and this is the sort of accommodation that as people in the workforce they would be expected to look after so why don't we start early and show them that we value them and this is the sort of provision we are making for them". And that largely has been respected.

Directing Excellence

Nigel McQuoid, who served as Director of Schools for a number of years (although 2008 was to be his final year with the ESF) gave a series of valuable interviews throughout the year. In one such interview he explained that the aim of the ESF was to give young people an education within a 'values environment' where 'Christian principles are evident' but he defined these values as:

christian with a small 'c'... honesty, humility, compassion; these are things which are seen as good things and would go a long way I think with schools that wouldn't want to align themselves with any faith.

Although Nigel McQuoid explained that in the schools of the ESF there was an emphasis upon 'looking at the person of Christ, looking at what he said, looking at what he did...he was clear as to what pleased God and what didn't please God' he was also clear that:

Christ...didn't force people into following him, he invited people to follow him...I think that has to be part of the message of Christ and therefore in dealing with people in a non-judgmental way

Autonomy and the freedom of young people to make their own decisions was vigorously defended by Nigel McQuoid who asserted, 'the absolute importance of a personal, unpressurised, thoughtful decision' whether about the career taken or the faith chosen by a young person because 'at the end of the day we will live by our own decisions'. The difference between the schools of the ESF and some more separate Christian schools was stressed:

We're not a Christian school for Christian children only employing only Christians...the environment that we're like is more pluralistic, it's more open you might say, so it's less controllable but I think control is not what we're about, we're about freedom of thinking, freedom to question

This 'freedom of thinking, freedom to question' was supported by an anecdote about a conversation with a former student who, although not a Christian, was considered to have benefited from the emphasis on moral education within the ESF:

One of the head boys of Emmanuel College came back to me once, he went to do PPE at Oxford - (not that that was the be all and end all but for him it was his potential, and for a guy from Gateshead it was great to see him go) and he came back to me and said, 'Mr McQuoid... I'm not a Christian but I've had the opportunity that I know my friends in other schools didn't have, to discuss and think about where I wanted to put my moral parameters, and I'm grateful to the school for that'

Studying Excellence

The DVD *The Emmanuel Schools Foundation – Excellence in Education* illustrates the way the ESF believes a strong work ethic combined with belief in young people and a Christian ethos can work together to produce excellent results. The narrator explains:

The schools' Christian ethos ensures that every student is valued as an individual and encouraged and supported to achieve their personal best

After this, a student in a smart school blazer and tie explains how the confidence teachers showed in him gave him the faith in himself to strive for even better results. The message here is that 'good' is not good enough and that only excellence will do:

You get told you're going to do better here whereas at the old school the teachers were happy for you to do better they didn't really ask you to do better... say you were getting a B that was quite good for the old school but here they tell you you're going to get the A and once you believe it you start doing the work
(DVD *The Emmanuel Schools Foundation – Excellence in Education*)

Sir Peter Vardy's Emmanuel Schools Foundation (ESF) has so far sponsored four schools in England. Beginning with Emmanuel College in Gateshead in 1990 (which remains a City Technology College) the Foundation sponsors The King's Academy in Middlesbrough, which opened in 2003, and Trinity Academy in Thorne near Doncaster, which opened in 2005. The Foundation's latest school, Bede Academy in Blyth, Northumberland, will open in September 2009. At Emmanuel College, in 2008 99% of students gained 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE and 85% of students gained 5+ A*-C GCSE grades including English and Mathematics. Yet the school has a normal distribution intake in terms of IQ and two-thirds of students come from areas designated deprived or highly deprived. The King's Academy, the second school sponsored by the ESF, has recently been designated the most improved school in the North East and is in the top 25% of schools nationally on the basis of CVA (Contextual Value Added) data. Trinity Academy is in the top 20% of schools according to the CVA data and, as we have seen, has been named 'Most Improved Academy' nationally and 'Most Improved School in Yorkshire and Humberside'.

Trinity Academy: Aims and Identity

Trinity Academy lies at the heart of the former mining community of Thorne, near Doncaster, in Yorkshire, in the North of England and has been ranked in the worst ten per cent nationally for unemployment and in the worst four per cent in the country as regards educational attainment. Health levels are within the worst five per cent nationally and the area has the fourth highest concentration of single parent families nationally. Essentially there are low levels of prosperity and high levels of deprivation. The standards at the local comprehensive school serving the community of Thorne and Moorends were in need of significant improvement before it was transformed into an academy by the Emmanuel Schools Foundation. I spent the equivalent of three weeks in Trinity Academy, the main case study school of the research project, between November 2007 and December 2008. In an interview with a parent who worked in a support role in the predecessor school and who now works at Trinity I was told:

I was an LSA (Learning Support Assistant) over there so I worked within the classroom [in the predecessor school] Total chaos the last few years... I had a son who is as good as gold, never in any trouble but not bright, B band, middle band, and their classes were chaos, never learnt a thing. But his last year here, he learnt more in his last year here than he learnt in 4 years over there but it was too late for him....

In 2004, in the predecessor school to Trinity Academy only 21% of students 'passed' GCSE at grade C or above in at least five of their school subjects, a performance significantly below the national average. In 2006, after the academy's first year (students like the young man mentioned above for whom it was 'too late' had been in the predecessor school for the first four years of secondary education) only 34% of students 'passed' their five school subjects. Yet by 2007, 65% of Trinity students experienced this level of academic success (in England nationally in 2007, 60.7% of students reached this minimum standard). In 2008 74% of Trinity students achieved these results. In other words, between 2006 and 2008 results improved by 40%. To what might such a dramatic improvement be attributed?

From the qualitative phase of the research (such as interviews with teachers, focus group work with 14-year-olds and lesson observations carried out over several weeks during 2007-8) it was clear that a very high proportion of students and staff linked or attributed the school's academic success to its emphasis on core values and character education. Evidence of this emphasis within the school culture was not initially sought (or even hypothesized) but emerged from the initial qualitative fieldwork. Following this qualitative phase, a confidential survey of all 14 year-olds (around 200 students) and all staff (around 100) was administered. This was designed to gauge the degree to which the views of the students and staff who had been interviewed were reflected more widely. The academy has around 1200 students between the ages of 11 and 18 and this project deliberately focused upon the perceptions and experiences of 14-year-olds (Year 9) to allow for as much depth as possible during the qualitative phase in the time available. These were the students

who had spent all of their secondary school careers at the academy as this research was conducted during its third year of operation.

Many schools in the UK rightly regard improved results of 10% (5+ A*- C at GCSE) as a significant achievement but to include 40% more teenagers in the experience of educational success in such a short period of time is remarkable. It should be noted that this transformation has been achieved within the same catchment area and with largely the same teachers. The school is the only secondary school in Thorne and Moorends, and as teachers' jobs are protected most transferred from the old school to the new academy that was built next door. Put simply, the students and teachers were generally the same but the management, buildings, school culture, values, ethos and character education are now different. Even before the 2008 results were published the school had been designated by SSAT (the government's Specialist Schools and Academies Trust) as the most academically improved academy in England and also the most academically improved secondary school in Yorkshire and Humberside.

Yet just after receiving these awards at prestigious ceremonies in London and receiving personal communication from the government minister responsible for schools, the Principal was asked during an interview whether 'character' or 'academics' was most important at the academy. Without the slightest hesitation he replied:

*'Character. I've said it's character first and then the rest will come.
If you've got character first the rest will come.'*

(Principal, Trinity Academy).

This substantiates research findings from the USA that, 'quality character education results in academic gains for students' (Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 78). Yet Trinity Academy is also remarkable because, in the English context, it is engaged in 'character education' at all. In England the emphasis in schools is upon 'citizenship education' (DfEE/QCA, 1998, 1999; Crick, 2000; Pike, 2006) rather than moral and character education. The similarities and differences between character education and citizenship education have been discussed recently (Davies et al, 2005) but it is sufficient to note here that the emphasis in citizenship is upon *political* knowledge and activity (the 'informed' and 'active' citizen) rather than *moral* knowledge and activity.

Character education such as that advocated by Professor Tom Lickona of the Centre for the 4th and 5th Rs (Respect and Responsibility) at New York University is distinctly unusual in England. Much more needs to be done to support character education in the UK. Promoting support for liberal democracy (Pike, 2008) rather than supporting personal moral or character education seems to be the priority for the UK government and yet, judging by the results achieved at Trinity Academy, the approaches to core values and character education developed there could be of benefit to other schools and ultimately to society.

What exactly is character education? Approaches vary but 'if a school-based initiative targets character development' as defined by Berkowitz and Bier (2004) 'in either its program design or its outcomes and goals, then it is a form of character education' (Berkowitz and Bier,

2004, p.74). The results of such character education would be welcomed in many schools:

Character education has been demonstrated to be associated with academic motivation and aspirations, academic achievement, prosocial behaviour, bonding to school, prosocial and democratic values, conflict-resolution skills, moral-reasoning maturity, responsibility, respect, self-efficacy, self-control, self-esteem, social skills, and trust in and respect for teachers.

(Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 75)

What is striking is that the architects of Trinity Academy's character education were unfamiliar with works such as *Character Matters* (Lickona, 2004) or *Educating for Character – How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility* (Lickona, 1991). Given that the academy was only in its third year when studied, the level of endorsement and subscription to character education from a wide range of staff and students is significant. Yet the character education at Trinity Academy is not so much a programme as it is pervasive. In the following section the views of staff and students are reported and Trinity's 'core values' (which are the basis of its character education) are compared with Lickona's 'essential virtues'. It is important to bear in mind that the motivation for the character education at Trinity Academy is provided by the Christian ethic that underpins the ESF's sponsorship of schools.

Core Values, Character Education and Christian Ethos

According to recent research, 'the school leader is the most critical individual in the success or failure of a character-education initiative' and 'to positively impact an entire school, the school principal's role is essential' (Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 77). The necessity of *living* one's values as a school principal is made clear:

An effective principal needs to (1) "get it," (2) "buy into it," and (3) "live it". In other words, leading a school of character requires that the principal first fully understands what quality character education entails (most do not). Then the principal must really commit to this vision and truly want to make it happen under his or her watch. Finally, the principal must have the requisite skills to enact quality character education and then to live it out both personally and programmatically

(Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 77)

It is worth noting the similarity between the language used here and in the following statement where the emphasis is also upon being able and willing to 'live it'. The Principal of Trinity Academy explained:

We are unusual I guess. A lot of places have a mission statement and they have core values but the key thing is do they live in your school? Are they alive?

This Principal's response when he was asked about his achievements indicates his priorities and values:

We have people here who will walk out of this place who are on their way to Oxbridge, I've got a boy in Year 13, he's just got straight As, Physics, Maths, Further Maths, Chemistry...but for me it's the youngster who has struggled, the youngster who has been an outsider, the youngster who has no self confidence, the youngster who has no self worth, the youngster who has a terrible time at home who comes here and actually for them gains confidence, gains self worth, enjoys school, makes friends, becomes accepted, does the best that they can do, they won't, won't get the headlines, but that for me is what Trinity is all about.

Although the principal is one of the most significant figures in this academy's success the views and values of the whole senior leadership team, comprising one principal and three vice-principals, are influential. When Dr Julie McGonigle, the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, was asked how significant the core values were in achieving the success at Trinity, the response was unequivocal: 'They are the single greatest factor'. The Vice-Principal for Pastoral Care in the school explained 'what you've got is something infectious, that comes right from the top...it seems to permeate everybody else's work'. Of course a school cannot have leadership without 'followership' and this is perhaps especially true of character education. Research has shown that 'staff involvement and commitment to character education is critical to effective implementation' (Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 75) and the validity of this conclusion is attested by findings from Trinity where core values are widely endorsed and subscribed to by staff.

When surveyed, 88% of Trinity staff either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that 'The Core Values of this school are easy to buy into' and 95% either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that, 'Here whole school values are explicit and the kids know what they are'. Indeed, 88% thought that 'in many other schools the whole school values are not as explicit as they are here'. The extracts from interviews below with teachers give a feel for the level of this endorsement:

I was ... at Thorne ... School before transition and continued in my role in the new school...I think prior to the Academy, I mean there wasn't the ethos wasn't as specific, it wasn't as clear. Having those core values at least makes people...not just the students but also the staff as well...think about what they are doing and how they actually fit in with those values..... they're there all the time
(English teacher)

The core values of this school are easy to buy into, I mean I don't think there is any teacher that wouldn't demonstrate, live by and model those core values really, pretty much in their life because that's the kind of people teachers tend to be ...You know, I've come from the previous school, my values haven't changed but I find myself completely comfortable with the core values here.

(History teacher)

In terms of Thorne ... School I'm not saying for a second that the school had no values, 100% not saying that, but they were in no way explicit or.... you couldn't have asked a pupil at Thorne Grammar School 'What are this school's values?' and have got an answer with any degree of certainty... you know like here they're explicit and the kids know what the values are ... it's reiterated in assemblies, you know, during assemblies it's linked to themes, they're given the little cards ... the independent learning centre down there... they're emblazoned across the glass ..the kids just know what they are ... it is through the system and through assemblies ...but I think staff probably use the values with the kids as well without actually realising they're doing it.
(Geography teacher)

At Trinity Academy 96% of students agreed that the school's core values were good values to follow but it is important to define what those values are (and how they compare to the 'essential virtues' underpinning much influential character education in the US) before considering how they pervade the life of the school. Upon one side of the ESF card belonging to each student is found the ESF Mission Statement and on the other the ESF Core Values: (see the following page).

It is significant that the Core Values of Trinity Academy in England have so much in common with the essential virtues (Lickona, 2004, pp. 8-11) upon which much influential character education in the US is based, despite having developed in isolation from each other. Comparing the 7 Core Values that Trinity Academy's character education is founded upon with the 10 essential virtues for strong character described by Lickona is illuminating (see pages 25-26).

Mission Statement & Core Values



THE EMMANUEL
SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Mission Statement

To provide all students and staff with the opportunity to work hard to achieve their personal best.

To encourage personal, moral and spiritual development within a Christian framework.

To create a disciplined, sensitive environment where everyone is equally valued.



CORE VALUES

All of our work will be characterised by the following values:

HONOURABLE PURPOSE

We aim to be positive in everything, doing what is good and aiming to benefit others as well as ourselves.

HUMILITY

We seek to do our personal best without bragging and to encourage others to achieve their best without being critical or jealous of their efforts.

COMPASSION

We care for those who are in difficulty and who are hurting, recognising that the world does not exist for us alone.

INTEGRITY

We can be trusted to be honest and truthful, to say what we mean and to do what we say.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We recognise that having the freedom to express ourselves means we must also accept responsibility for our words, thoughts and actions.

COURAGE

We aim to do what is right, whatever the cost; we stand up for the weak, whatever the danger; we face our fears and find ways of defeating them.

DETERMINATION

We know that hard work and the refusal to give up are essential if we are to achieve anything worthwhile.

Essential Virtues (Lickona, 2004)	Core Values of Trinity Academy
<p>1. Wisdom or Good Judgement</p> <p>‘how to put the other virtues into practice – when to act, how to act... Wisdom enables us to discern correctly, to see what is truly important in life, and to set priorities’. p.8</p>	<p>All our work will be characterised by the following values</p> <p>Determination We know that hard work and the refusal to give up are essential if we are to achieve anything worthwhile.</p>
<p>2. Justice</p> <p>‘includes so many of the interpersonal virtues – civility, honesty, respect, responsibility and tolerance’ p.8</p>	<p>Integrity We can be trusted to be honest and truthful, to say what we mean and to do what we say.</p> <p>Accountability We recognise that having the freedom to express ourselves means we must also accept responsibility for our words, thoughts and actions.</p>
<p>3. Fortitude</p> <p>‘to do what is right in the face of difficulty...Courage, resilience, patience, perseverance, endurance, and a healthy self-confidence are all aspects of fortitude’. p.8</p>	<p>Courage We aim to do what is right, whatever the cost; we stand up for the weak, whatever the danger; we face our fears and find ways of defeating them.</p>
<p>4. Self-control (temperance)</p> <p>‘Self-control is the ability to govern ourselves...to control our temper, regulate our sensual appetites and passions...It’s the power to resist temptation’. p.7</p>	<p>Accountability We recognise that having the freedom to express ourselves means we must also accept responsibility for our words, thoughts and actions.</p>
<p>5. Love ‘selfless love’</p> <p>‘A whole cluster of important human virtues – empathy, compassion, kindness, generosity, service, loyalty, patriotism...and forgiveness make up the virtue of love’. p.9</p>	<p>Compassion We care for those who are in difficulty and who are hurting, recognising that the world does not exist for us alone.</p>

<p>6. A Positive Attitude 'The character strengths of hope, enthusiasm, flexibility, and a sense of humor are all part of a positive attitude' p. 9</p>	<p>Honourable Purpose We aim to be positive in everything, doing what is good and aiming to benefit others as well as ourselves.</p>
<p>7. Hard Work 'hard work includes initiative, diligence, goal-setting, and resourcefulness p.10</p>	<p>Determination We know that hard work and the refusal to give up are essential if we are to achieve anything worthwhile.</p>
<p>8. Integrity 'being faithful to moral conscience, keeping our word, and standing up for what we believe... to be "whole" so that what we say and do in different situations is consistent... Integrity is ... telling the truth to oneself p. 10</p>	<p>Integrity We can be trusted to be honest and truthful, to say what we mean and to do what we say. All our work will be characterised by the following values</p>
<p>9. Gratitude 'Gratitude is often described as the secret of a happy life. It reminds us that we all drink from wells we did not dig. It moves us to count our everyday blessings' p.10</p>	<p>Honourable Purpose We aim to be positive in everything, doing what is good and aiming to benefit others as well as ourselves.</p>
<p>10. Humility 'Humility enables us to take responsibility for our faults and failings (rather than blaming someone else), apologize for them, and seek to make amends' p.11</p>	<p>Humility We seek to do our personal best without bragging and to encourage others to achieve their best without being critical or jealous of their efforts. Accountability We recognise that having the freedom to express ourselves means we must also accept responsibility for our words, thoughts and actions.</p>

Ian Brew, the Principal of Trinity Academy, explained that he is open with parents about the source of the school's core values. The reason the Principal can 'live' the values is that they are integral to his Christian identity and are founded in a living Christian faith. Describing a meeting for prospective parents, the Principal explained:

I say to the parents when they come and I put the values up: "Do you want to send your child here? These are our values." Because they say, "Oh, they're great, humility, compassion, all good things." And I say, "We're a Christian ethos academy. We find them perfectly in Jesus Christ. That's why they're our values."

Glanzer could be writing of the parents of students at Trinity Academy when he refers to 'low income families most in need of healthy and vibrant character education options' (Glanzer, 2003, p. 304) and the enthusiasm of parents for the school is worth noting when one considers that most of Trinity's white, working class parents are not regular churchgoers. In a 2007/2008 survey, 92% of parents who responded, either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that 'the school is led and managed well'.

During one visit to the school I observed the Principal of Trinity Academy engage in a Question and Answer session with a group of 14-year-olds. When asked by one student where the core values came from, he replied:

We sat down and we thought 'Well what do we want Trinity to look like?' ...We mean Trinity as a school and a school is people, right, it's us, it's who we are, it's our attitudes, it's our outlooks, it's our behaviours, it's our priorities. So we thought, 'Well what do we want the people to look like, what do we want Trinity to look like?'

The Principal and his senior colleagues had a clear idea of what they wanted Trinity to 'look like' because of the relation between these values and the Christian ethos. The values are derived from the life, work, ministry and example of Jesus Christ:

We said 'Well we want it to look like the best person looks like'... And so we thought, 'Well who's the best person who ever lived?' and we thought 'Jesus Christ is the best person who ever lived. Well how was he the best? How was he? Well he put other people first, so that's humility. He overcame all the big challenges in his life with determination and courage, and whatever he did he did for the right reasons within honourable purpose. He was compassionate to people around him even when they let him down he was compassionate'. So that's where those core values came from.

Core values inside the school, contribute to the transformation outside the school as Ian Richardson, a Vice Principal at Trinity Academy, explained:

When the Ofsted Report came out it said we'd made significant progress at transforming the life chances and opportunities of the students in this area, that's the job I came to do and there it was in black and white...and to put it in context as a Christian that's what God brought me here for... making a difference
(Vice Principal, Ian Richardson)

The Christian commitment to serving a community and achieving a transformation of opportunities was evident in this interview. The Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning at Trinity Academy, Dr Julie McGonigle, explained to me how the transformation at Trinity had been achieved by envisioning staff and operationalising the core values in lessons:

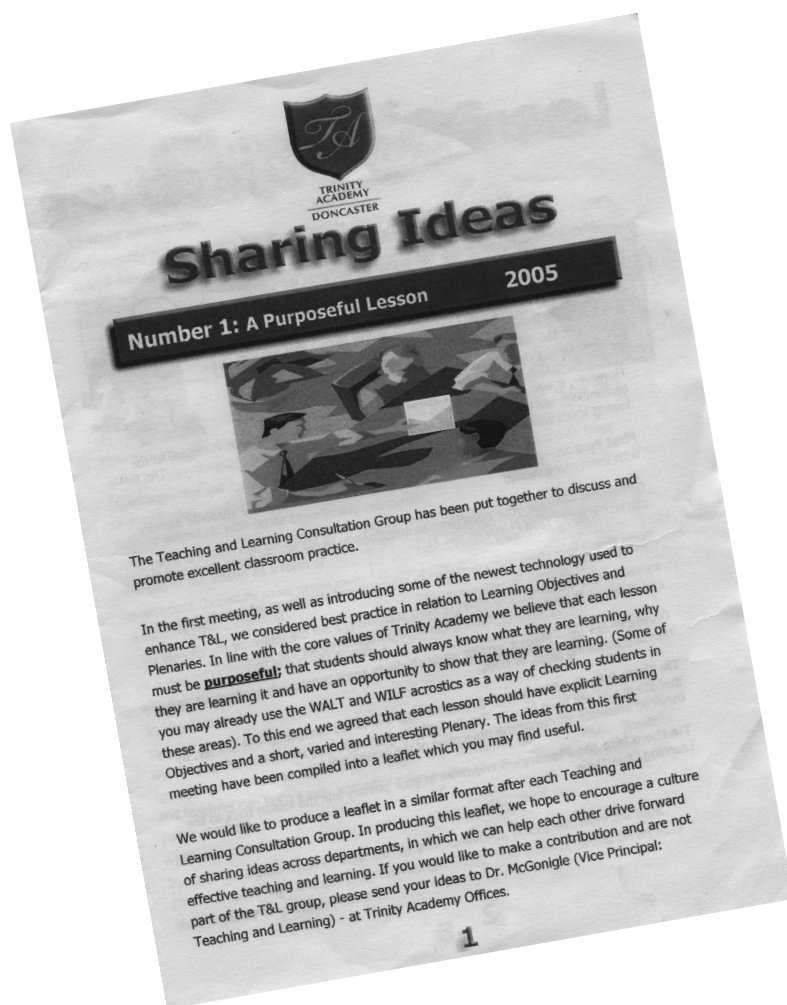
We brought the values card to the staff at the first whole staff meeting which was in November 2004. And essentially, using the values card - that was the first time they'd ever seen the values card and so by this stage, even though everybody hadn't quite sorted out what their new jobs were yet, there was at least the bulk of the teachers knew they were going to be at the Academy. We went to a hotel in Doncaster and painted a vision based on the values card. So that was the first, the very first, thing we did was give them a picture 'This is the type of young person we want to create'... and we were able to then say "It's this, this is the nub of it, whether you're Christian or non-Christian this is what we're about, it's open and transparent and this is what we're about'...

So that was the first thing we did. And after Christmas, in February, we had a senior management residential weekend. So we brought everybody from the kind of new senior managers plus the senior managers from Thorne to a lovely hotel in Guisborough, and that's when we presented them with the values card. So they'd obviously seen it in the first instance but this was now thinking 'OK this is our vision, how do we become managers, what does that look like?'. And at that senior team meeting it was fascinating because people were genuinely challenged about their own life...initially in the values card it was discipline, not determination, it was self-discipline... it was that self-discipline one, you had people walking away from that weekend going 'Oh I've given up cigarettes, I'm not going to drink again, I'm going on a diet', it was so amazing. And people genuinely were discussing amongst themselves. I mean one guy said 'Oh I've just had a son, and to be presented with a kind of set of core values it gives me hope that I have something on which to base my parenting'. And so this was like real challenge to people's own identity.

So then we did the same with Heads of Department, and at each stage it was getting a little less visionary and a little bit more instrumental in the sense that we were then looking at 'Well how do the values translate into a lesson, into a scheme of work first of all?'. And so I presented a scheme of work and showed how each of the values had determined how that scheme of work was coming about. How does it translate into a lesson plan? How

does it translate into a lesson? And we watched a lesson and critiqued it on the basis of the values. And so that was that, and then we did the same with the pastoral staff. Then we set up three consultation groups...and they ran over the course of six months and people came from Thorne to our shed, as it were. And that was 'buy in', so anyone could opt in, you didn't have to be a pastoral manager, you didn't have to be a head of department, anyone could buy in to any of those consultation groups, you just decided you wanted to come and be part of creating this kind of new vision.

But the teaching and learning group was probably the biggest. What we did was, we looked at a value each meeting and what does that look like in a lesson, and created a leaflet.....(see below). So, as you see, a purposeful lesson, so what does that mean to have honourable purpose in your lesson? And that was bringing it down to kind of brass tacks in terms of starters and plenaries and where are you going - do you have a purpose in your lesson or not?



Reading Values in English and the Humanities at Trinity Academy

While the core values at Trinity Academy are those of the ESF they appeared more prominent at this academy than in the other ESF schools. Of course it is easy for values to appear on a card or to be engraved on the glass wall opposite the doors into the school hall but not at all easy for them to become embedded, over a relatively short period of time, into a school culture. To communicate core values through the pastoral care system of a school or through its assemblies is one thing but for character education to inform the academic curriculum is quite another and yet this is what has happened at Trinity Academy. From studying a Shakespeare play to looking at historical source images, students were observed being prompted to apply their understanding of their school's core values to their studies in the arts and humanities. The following extracts from lessons serve to illustrate:

Teacher in History Lesson on Slavery

Catching and selling slaves... I want you to try and keep in mind these three things... when you look at what you see on the screen and when you see these sources try and just imagine if that was you. If you're not imagining it was you imagine it was somebody that you obviously love and care about, your brother, your sister, your family, your mother, your father, anything like that. But the best thing I can say is, just try and put yourself in that position as if it was you...

Now then, what we're going to try and focus on as we do this is to try and ultimately look at some of the things that we obviously hold very dear to ourselves in the school we work in and the school we are in and that is some of the core values. And what I've tried to do, to try and narrow it down for you, is pick three of what I would consider to be the most relevant core values that we try and look at day by day in the work we do and how it applies to what we are going to look at today... I don't think there's a better example of anything so far we've done in our history course this year...

The first one is the honourable purpose, right? You've got to think to yourself if that was you, are the actions that you're taking part in, are they in some way benefiting other people or would they be benefiting others around that particular area... straight away with slavery, this word of compassion - are you caring for other people, are you thinking of other people and giving them your best interests and best thoughts of care, and just looking after their best interests when they're having times of difficulty, right? The final one is this idea of integrity. Are the people that are doing these things (what you're seeing in the sources) ...are they honest? Is what they're doing honest? Are their intentions honest?

In this lesson the teacher was observed engaging in the sort of practice advocated by Professor Karen Bohlin in *Teaching Character Education through Literature* (2005) although the teacher was unfamiliar with 'character education' or Bohlin's work from the US. In this example, the English teacher encourages students to undertake a character analysis task employing the students' understanding of the school's Core Values as a frame. I am not suggesting that this use of the core values as a framework would occur in every lesson for this teacher was observed making no reference to core values on two previous occasions (when teaching writing to persuade and writing to explain) but the fact that the school's core values are discussed in English *at all* would seem to be innovative practice, especially in the UK.

- Teacher: Think about our core values because we've been looking at all the different qualities of these characters. Think about the core values that we at Trinity live by or try to live by. I want you please to write down which core value you think Beatrice and Benedick either embody or break. Okay, what do I mean by embody?
- Pupil: Stick to
- Teacher: Stick to – so which one do they either stick to or break? And I'd like a brief explanation. You've got 3 minutes to do that...
Which of the core values?...
(Children discuss task)
- Teacher: Just bob your pens down for me please. Very quickly, hands up if you have a core value that you think Beatrice embodies? Bethany?
- Bethany: Determination
- Teacher: Why determination?
- Bethany: Cos um she stands up for what she believes in like when Hero is getting um slandered and like the shame of it, she believes him
- Teacher: Good yeah determination – could also be seen as courage. How about a core value that she breaks? Anyone got a core value that she breaks? Christina?
- Christina: Humility
- Teacher: Why humility?
- Christina: She can be quite boastful
- Teacher: She can be quite boastful, I do agree. Very quickly, has anyone got a core value that Benedick embodies?
- Ellis: Courage because he fought in a war
- Teacher: Absolutely courage because he fought in a war and the big one, the one that he breaks?
- Guy: Integrity
- Teacher: Why Integrity?
- Guy: Because he lies about his feelings towards Beatrice

When I asked another English teacher (who had a PhD in English literature and was leaving at the end of term to take up another post) about the difference the Christian ethos made

to the teaching of English it was clear that she believed the cultural literacy of students was enhanced as a result of the Christian ethos and that there were considerable benefits when teaching particular literary texts:

I think it's impacted on English in a very positive way although I am not a practicing Christian myself. I enjoy doing tutor prayers every week, I approach my tutor group looking at the moral message, but very much approaching it as a text and looking at textual analysis. I think that in itself is a good means of building up literacy skills. For me, the most significant impact has been on the study of literature because there are so many texts where there are biblical references...students are automatically familiar with Bible stories; they can pick up a reference straight away.

According to the two hundred 14-year-old students at Trinity Academy, only 35% thought Core Values came into their English lessons whereas 90% believed Core Values came into their PTE lessons, of which 65% said this was 'quite often or very often'. The real figures might be higher when one considers that students are not always aware of how value-laden lessons are, especially if the term 'Core Values' is not explicitly mentioned.

PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics) lesson

- Dr Pike: OK, so PTE...do you think you've covered the whole school values or have you heard them mentioned in PTE?
- Aaron: Yeah *that's the main part of it where we hear them mentioned.*
- Sam: That's the base of it really.
- Dr Pike: The whole school values are really covered in PTE?
- Sam: Yeah.
- Dr Pike: Tell me a bit about that.
- Sam: Well we've studied Bible and like we've only done... tiny bits, so doing the Bible like *the core values and that come up a lot in the Bible so we see them a lot.* And like last year when we did the story of Ruth our teacher told us how it fits into core values.
- Dr Pike: And can you explain to me how the story of Ruth makes sense of the whole school values?
- Sam: She had *courage to leave her home* and town and she was *determined to go with her step-mum* and like make it work and that.

'Reading' the Sources of Shared Values

The possibility of having a Christian foundation while simultaneously fostering autonomy and respecting diversity is sometimes doubted by those who are uneasy about referring to the Judeo-Christian sources of values. Arguably, the approach to moral and character education of secular schools often 'obliterates the differences of particular communities and creeds and empties morality of its substance and depth' in an effort 'to capitalize on what habitus remains by creating an inclusive moral vocabulary that is shared by all' (Hunter 2000 p. 225). What is fascinating about character and moral education at Trinity Academy is that it successfully capitalizes on 'what habitus remains' while acknowledging the Christian inspiration for its values.

In its Core Values, Trinity Academy uses the sort of inclusive moral vocabulary to be found in the work of influential educators such as Lickona in *Teaching for Character*.

Despite this diversity, we can identify basic, shared values that allow us to engage in public moral education in a pluralistic society. Indeed, pluralism itself is not possible without agreement on values such as justice, honesty, civility, democratic process, and a respect for truth

(Lickona, 1991, p. 20)

At Trinity, a diverse range of people endorse and subscribe to the core values but do not share the same source or justification for those values. One history teacher, who had transferred from the previous school, illustrated this rather well in an interview:

I mean I am not a Christian but I can subscribe to those values because they are just humanitarian I suppose basically, and if you're a decent human being you would share those core values anyway.

This may explain why 97% of 14-year-old students either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the statement that 'Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views'. What is important to note is that although sources of values may differ, the core values of Trinity Academy are maximally inclusive, can be subscribed to by people of various religious or secular persuasions and also promote equality and inclusion. People may differ in their beliefs about the sources of, or justification for, these values but the values themselves can be agreed upon:

'A Christian could claim that treating people kindly is justified because the Bible or God says that it is justified. A Kantian might say that treating people kindly is justified because reason dictates that we should treat people as ends and not only as means.... We can imagine, then, a Catholic and a secular Kantian who endorse an identical set of liberal political values. But the Catholic believes that these values are justified (at least in part) because God and the Catholic Church have sanctioned them as moral truths. The secular Kantian, on the other hand, believes that the only possible normative source of moral values is our nature as autonomous human beings'

(Dagowitz, 2004, 171).

When all staff and around two hundred 14-year-olds were surveyed, 99% of staff and 96% of students at Trinity Academy agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's core values are still very good values to follow'. Acknowledging the sources of values is vital but all too often does not happen in schools. Perry Glanzer pins the blame for the demise of moral and character education in public schools in the US upon 'the current structure of American public education that encourages moral educators to provide forms of moral education *divorced from particularity* and acceptable to all' (Glanzer, 2003, p. 294 my italic), in other words, secularized moral education. Evidently the charge of being 'divorced from particularity' cannot be made of England's most academically improved academy as it is still married to (and supported by) its particular Christian foundations

The Trinity experience indicates that shared values are by no means incompatible with a particular Christian faith that is tolerant of others. Indeed, Professor Tom Lickona notes that 'we should help students appreciate that every person has intrinsic dignity and value – sacred value, if one believes that we are each created in the image of God' (Lickona, 2004, p. 140). The similarity between Lickona's 'essential virtues' and the core values at Trinity Academy can be attributed to the shared religious source of the Judeo-Christian tradition although this is not necessarily always explicit. Trinity does not seek to impose the religious truth claims of Christianity on young people but it does encourage them to take truth claims seriously. The Principal explained how he expressed his position in assemblies:

My assemblies are littered with the phrases "This is what I believe, it's up to you as to what you think", 'I suggest this to you', 'Christians believe'... I don't say to people: 'This is it, you'd better believe me or else', I say, 'There's a lot of views out there. This is mine'.

This is in keeping with the position outlined in the Trinity Academy Prospectus which states: 'We have a Christian ethos which means that faith and belief are important and we encourage students to think for themselves about the big questions of life' while 'traditional Christian views form the starting point for these discussions'. Schools such as Trinity may be more likely to provide a coherent moral culture and distinctive ethos than secular schools that eschew the sources of values and the narratives in which those values are located. Indeed, students' autonomy may not be best served if they are not encouraged to explore the sources of values promoted through the curriculum (Pike, 2007; 2008).

The King's Academy: Aims and Identity

The aims of The King's Academy reflect those of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation and the school has the same core values as Trinity Academy. Yet, The King's Academy has its own distinct identity. Around a tenth of the school role have either visual or hearing impairment or moderate learning difficulties. Inclusion and engagement were key values expressed by Chris Drew, the Principal. In an interview he commented on his own experience as a pupil in a large comprehensive school where very few of the 250 students in a year seemed to experience the highlights of school life. In contrast, the aim at The Kings is to include and engage everyone in a 'very full and busy school life' as Chris Drew explained:

We want children's minds to engage in whatever they're doing, whether that's on the sports field or the school production or whatever. Too many kids these days are passive, they drift into school, do what they're told and leave...I want to engage as many kids as possible...I want to breathe that passion and enthusiasm into young people here...It is about engagement, engaging your mind in academic matters, in broadening your horizons and trying new things, in cultural opportunities I'm very passionate about, engagement in a spiritual sense, asking and thinking about the big questions.

Data (lesson observations, interviews with students, teachers, heads of department, principal and vice principals etc) was collected over just three days at The King's Academy. The importance of including everyone was a theme that emerged from the interviews and focus group work conducted with Year 9 students. When I asked these 14-year-olds what their school believed in and what it was passionate about, it became clear that the simple priority was for everyone 'to get a good education'. For students, this meant that 'no-one gets interrupted' and 'everyone can listen to the teacher'. These young people also told me that their school 'doesn't leave people out' and 'if you're not good at something you still have a go'. With reference to the Christian ethos, students differentiated between being a Christian and being good. One boy explained, 'You don't have to be a Christian' but emphasised that teachers 'want you to do good things' and talked about how this was communicated through stories in assemblies. Assemblies delivered by the Principal and a Vice-Principal, were inclusive while offering insights from the perspective of the Christian faith and experience. One example of how the perspective of the Christian faith is communicated can be seen in the following extract from an assembly on the theme of 'Faith'. The Principal was well aware of the needs of a diverse audience:

The theme of the week, as you know, is faith. And the difficulty we've got is everybody in the room is in a different place. If we had a sliding scale of people who say they have no faith in God and go right up the other end, people who say they've got full faith in God, I would say there are people in this room at every single stage along that way. So I'm speaking to a very broad audience. I'm speaking to some people who'd say 'Don't believe in God, what a load of hogwash, what a load of rubbish.' I'm speaking to some

people who say, 'I've listened and I've heard things about God that are of interest and there might be something there.' I'm also speaking to some people who say, 'Listen, I haven't made my mind up. I hear things that suggest that God exists and I hear other things that suggest He doesn't. You know, give me time and I'll make my mind up either way.' There'll be other people in this room who say, 'I'm pretty certain that God's out there. I don't know for sure, but I'm pretty certain.' And there'll be others who say, 'I know 100% that if I put my faith in God, then He will respond to me.' We're all at different places. And there's no shame in that. We're all on a journey. I'm on a journey; each one of you is on a journey. You're trying to find out what life is all about, trying to understand it, and we're all at different places. But I'm hoping some of the things I say this morning will be of assistance to you wherever you are on that journey. There's a story that we read in the Bible, the book of Matthew that tells us a little bit about faith, that I think is a good place to start.

After reading the Parable of the Mustard Seed from Matthew chapter 13, the Principal of The King's Academy provided the following interpretation:

I guess the most interesting thought this morning about faith is what he (Christ) says about the mustard seed. 'Even if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can move mountains.' Now I don't know if you've ever seen a mustard seed. Many of you will have seen seeds that you plant in the garden, tomato seeds and other things. But a mustard seed is tiny. You could have literally thousands of mustard seeds on the palm of your hand. You can barely see them with the naked eye. But true enough, if you plant just one mustard seed, a mustard plant will grow. And you will be furnished with as much mustard as you wish to have. The point about faith is even if your faith is really, really small, even if you're at that point in life where your faith in God is just tiny, and you don't have much faith in him, but you've got a little bit, then that's enough, because over time, that mustard seed will grow. That faith that you have will grow.

Following this introduction the Principal used illustrations drawn from recent events and also from the arts and history to illustrate:

In Melbourne Art Gallery in Australia there's a painting by George Hare, entitled, "The Victory of Faith." The picture is set in Roman times and it shows two young girls, one black and one white, sitting in the room behind the arena where they're going out to be thrown and eaten by the lions. But on their faces there is no sign of fear, no dread of what's going to happen to them, no dread of the lions waiting for their blood, or of Roman tyranny. In fact, these two young girls are sleeping peacefully. The artist was trying to depict the victory of faith. You see if you have faith you're not going through life worried and anxious. You're going through life at peace. Can we not, through faith, have peace? My final thought with you

this morning is another famous verse from the Bible that says this, "Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you." I once heard somebody speaking on this verse and they said, 'Just take the words 'ask, seek, and knock, a,s,k.' And if you like, that is what faith is all about. If you ask for it, you can have it. Let's close in a word of prayer: Dear Lord, if faith can move a mountain, if faith can move a hill, your prayers will be answered and we're certain that they will. It may take weeks or months or years, it may not take that long, but faith can move a mountain if our faith is good and strong. May we seek to put our faith in you. We pray these things in your name, Amen.

The theme 'Faith' was also taken up by a Vice-Principal in his assembly and the message communicated was that matters of faith are important and should be taken seriously:

This morning I want us to think about what it is that you put your faith in. What do you trust and believe and have faith in because it's important. Matters of faith are important. Don't let anybody ever say to you that they're not important. Matters of faith, matters of what you believe or don't believe to be true are important. They are the things that will determine the direction in which you go in your life. If you can imagine a sailboat with a rudder that steers the direction in which that boat goes, those things that you believe to be true, that you believe in and have faith in, those are the things that will direct that ship, that boat, that will give it direction.

When all 170 students from Year 9 were surveyed 83% of them agreed (33% of them strongly) with the statement 'Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important'. Autonomous decision-making about religious matters was evidently encouraged and 97% of Year 9 students 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement 'It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in'. The fact that 72% of students 'strongly agreed' with the statement demonstrates the freedom they experience. Respecting other people's beliefs and views even when you may disagree was shown by the survey to be a strong emphasis at The King's Academy. 98% of students 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement: 'Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views'. Survey findings, observations and interviews all confirmed the emphasis on toleration and including everyone at The King's Academy. Assemblies like the ones I attended prompted students to consider matters of faith and, in common with the other ESF schools, students were encouraged to take faith and religious truth claims seriously.

Reading Values in English and the Humanities at The King's Academy

The Head of PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics) explained the difference between RE and PTE:

I think here we try to bring in the Philosophy and the Ethics, so it is looking not just at religion (because RE tends to be Religious Studies and it brings in moral issues as well by nature, you know, RE is like that) but I think specifically here we want it to be Philosophy so we get the kids thinking for themselves. With Theology it's Bible based; Ethics is looking at issues and how do people make decisions about what's right and wrong. We're looking at two main world religions other than Christianity. We look at Islam and Judaism, which is more or less what I was teaching in a secular school, because I think ... they get confused if they're doing too many religions.

The Head of PTE explained also how Mark's Gospel is taught and how she had her own beliefs but also wanted students to reach their own conclusions

I teach it as a document written in the first century by somebody who knew eye witnesses. I teach it in an intelligent way and in a rational way, so we sort of approach it as a historian would or a lawyer would looking at evidence, which I think meets the children where they are.

When communicating her own beliefs the Head of PTE uses phrases such as, 'Well I would believe this because I'm a Christian' and pointed out that this was 'just like anybody who is not a Christian will say exactly what they think'.

The Head of History at the King's Academy observed that 'so much of the History curriculum is about the history of Christianity' and noted the congruence between this and the ethos of the school although she suggested the whole school values could be subscribed to regardless of faith:

Although I'm not Christian... there's nothing in this school that goes against what I would believe in just as a decent person... The core values are something that to me personally would be core values and therefore they are the way that I've always taught anyway...I think the fact that the senior management constantly push those values and they're consistent in pushing values, I think that makes a difference... I think a strong senior management with a very clear direction is a good thing in a school, it is important... I can buy into them whether I'm a Christian or not and so can many of the children, because a value that talks about honourable purpose, you know, you don't have to be a Christian to be an honourable person...they can still see that those values are actually okay, it's a fairly decent way to live your life.

The emphasis upon the core values of the school was endorsed, according to the Head of History, by children whose religious beliefs were different to those of the senior leadership of the school:

I mean we've got a large population of Muslim children in this school ... and those children obviously, and their parents, are obviously very happy for those children to be here ... my understanding is that a lot of Muslim parents actually prefer Catholic, Church of England, schools like this, because there's maybe a greater emphasis on moral values.

For the Head of English, the knowledge the students gained of the Christian tradition was valuable when studying English literature:

For example, yesterday there was a revision session after school on Lord of the Flies and one of the children suggested "It's like Revelation ... whenever God's left everything goes terrible and they'll kill each other and set the Apocalypse".

The school's focus on biblical texts was considered to enhance children's reading and be of benefit to English:

The English department is teaching reading, you know, let's not presume that all pupils come up and are able to read. And if we take the Bible as a text, you know, that's got a reading age which is quite developed, so even at that level, even the basic skills that we're teaching in reading is part of our ethos... the Bible is also...you know, it's got parables in it, it's not a literal book the whole way through

The school's focus on discussing moral issues and ethics was also considered to be helpful when reading GCSE English literature texts:

Another example would be like Of Mice and Men. Obviously at the end George kills Lenny. Well somebody suggested, 'Is that euthanasia? Is that right? Do we agree with that?'

According to this teacher students were adept at identifying teachers' religious position and were keen to find out the views of teachers on various issues:

They know who the Christian teachers are and they know who aren't, they're very good at sussing that out

Research indicates that 'students like teachers to express their own values besides indicating differences in values' (Veugelers, 2000, p. 44) and when teachers as here, at The King's Academy, acknowledge their values (and the sources of those values) students can interpret the views they hear expressed in the light of this knowledge.

Emmanuel College: Aims and Identity

The Prospectus for Emmanuel College states that it is, 'Tyneside's City Technology College offering a comprehensive education with a technological and vocational bias to students aged between 11 and 19'. The College has a 'Christian foundation' and its 'focus is upon the value of the individual and upon the development and extension of natural ability, with the end view in mind of seeing the emergence of highly skilled, well qualified, confident, enterprising, creative and moral citizens who are ready for the adult world'. Data (lesson observations, interviews with students, teachers, heads of department, principal and vice principals etc) collection took place over several days and some of the most valuable insights into the culture of Emmanuel College came from students themselves. Their views, reproduced below, reflect the intentions of the Principal of Emmanuel College, who explained:

Our responsibility as teachers in a Christian ethos school is to provoke students to a personal response. It's not our responsibility to make them think as we think... the view that our students come to is very much a personal response and we must honour that.

Two focus groups comprised of Year 9 students, with no teachers in attendance, and their anonymity preserved, expressed the following views when asked about the identity of their school and its Christian ethos:

I think this school's very good and you get a good education, and the teachers respect your decisions, whether you believe in the Bible or not. And because we've all got respect for each other it really prepares you for when you go for a job
(Year 9 Emmanuel College Student)

I think this school is a very good school, which you can see by the brilliant results that we're getting and everything like that. But I also think it teaches us like, it tries to teach us a more valuable lesson like how to live our lives which sometimes like academic things can't really bring and we have like core values cards and stuff which they take things from the Bible but they like still leave you to your own lives and never brainwash us
(Year 9 Emmanuel College Student)

This school gives the education that you need to make your own decisions about Christianity... We're not forced into anything, but we make our own choices ... I think its up to you to make your own mind
(Year 9 Emmanuel College Student)

I think that even if you're not a Christian, the Bible, the government agrees, the Bible is a general good set of moral rules, so even if you're not then the stories that it tells, you've got it that rules are good anyway and a good set of rules to apply to your life
(Year 9 Emmanuel College Student)

It [the school] tells you in a lot of detail what Christianity's like and goes with the stories in the Bible and everything so it gives you enough information to choose whether you want to be a Christian or not so it's like not forcing you to do anything, it's just allowing you to have your own choice...a good education but it bases its rules around the Bible
(Year 9 Emmanuel College Student)

It's good that they give you the opportunity to learn from the Bible and the stuff that surrounds the Bible. But they definitely don't brainwash you into being a Christian... I just think it's good that they give you the opportunity to look at the Bible and you can learn for yourself whether you want to be a Christian or not
(Year 9 Emmanuel College Student)

These representative statements by 14-year-old students indicate that they believe their ability to make their own decisions is respected by teachers at Emmanuel College and their autonomy is supported in a school that has a distinct Christian ethos. Openness, dialogue, exchange and the development of students' critical faculties are evidently encouraged at Emmanuel College. Honesty and tolerance, where one's right to hold different views to others, is respected at Emmanuel. Tolerance, we should note, is not based on agreement for to be tolerant is to show respect and courtesy towards those with whom we may profoundly disagree. The importance of respect for others even when one does not agree with their views was expressed by one of the vice principals at Emmanuel College:

I think that when you come into the school... you appreciate that there's a huge mutual respect for each other that we have people from different backgrounds, different faiths, probably representing a fair range of society in terms of thinking, background, preferences and so on and yet people get on really, really well together in terms of tolerance. I think one of our strengths is that we don't shy away from issues, that we're prepared to show that whatever your differences we can still respect each other rather than just shying away from saying anything, we'll actually be prepared to talk something through and say, "Well, okay, maybe we don't agree on an issue but you know we still respect each other" and that's such a valuable thing for them in the future in society to show tolerance towards others.
(Vice Principal Pastoral, Emmanuel College)

Important insights into the religious beliefs underpinning this respect for young people were given by Jonathan Winch, the Principal of Emmanuel College, at the one-day dissemination conference, held in the Centenary Gallery at the University of Leeds in October 2008. It is worth quoting from his presentation at length:

From Jonathan Winch's Presentation at the 'Faith in the Academy' Conference at the Centenary Gallery, University of Leeds, October 2008

The view that I'm asserting is a simple expression of the doctrine which we sometimes call Imago Dei, the doctrine that children are created in the image of God. It's there at the very start of the Bible, Genesis Chapter 1 verses 26 & 27, 'Then God said, let us make man in our image, so God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female, he created them'.

A Christian anthropology has man, male and female, as the pinnacle of God's creation and therefore quite distinct from the animal species. Human life is sacred. To take a human life involves the destruction of one who bears the image of the divine. In Psalm 8 verses 5 and 6, mankind is described in these words, 'You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour, you made him ruler over the works of your hands, you put everything under his feet'.

So what is a child, according to this view? A responsible person, able to make decisions and to change destiny, equipped with astonishing creative and rational ability, accountable to God for the life that he or she leads. The Bible does clearly teach that man exercised his freedom of will to rebel against his creator, that man stands in need of redemption provided by Jesus Christ. Yet the Bible is also clear that even in fallen man the image of God remains, albeit marred.

Some of you with young children will have been dragged off to see Disney's remake of C.S. Lewis' classic Prince Caspian recently. These are the words which are spoken by Aslan to the children, and it captures the paradox of fallen humanity perfectly, 'You come of the Lord Adam and the Lady Eve and that is both honour enough to erect the head of the poorest beggar, and shame enough to bow the shoulders of the greatest Emperor on earth'. A child then is a being whose entire constitution images and reflects God. And this has profound implications for education.

First of all Imago Dei generates high expectations. We've heard about those this morning: high expectations, both as to academic potential and character development. Secondly, Imago Dei promotes a sense of purpose; like our Maker we have been created instinctively creative and we have been given the gift of creativity for a reason. Thirdly, man - male and female - has been created to image the triune God in being innately relational. Adults and children are created to live in community. And there is a mutual submission of one's gifting to the well being of the other, which is an expression of a personal humility within that community.

When interviewed, a vice-principal at Emmanuel College also explicitly made the connection between Christianity and thinking of others rather than only of oneself:

In terms of a Christian view of society, it's not some sort of weird, strange, anti-social kind of idea. Christian thinking is very much challenging people to think to give something to society, to be prepared to think about others rather than themselves, to make a positive contribution, to be salt in a society rather than to drag things down... some people decry the fact that so many young people go out into the world and just expect to take and take and take but we would hope our kids at least would be challenged to give, to serve and I think our programme is really exemplary
(Vice Principal Pastoral, Emmanuel College)

The importance of character in young people's education and their ability to contribute, to learn to 'give' rather than to 'take' was emphasized and underpinned by Christian commitments:

We really perceive them [students] as being people who can make a contribution to society so there's a big emphasis on service and charitable giving, on giving, not just taking, and so there's a sense of personal responsibility which we would see as very much a part of the Christian view of the world. And in terms of respect toward others, accepting responsibility for one's actions and not making excuses, holding people to account
(Vice Principal Pastoral, Emmanuel College)

At Emmanuel College, the emphasis on excellence for everyone is confirmed by outstanding results. In 2008, 99% of students gained 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and 85% of students gained 5+ A*-C GCSE grades *including English and Mathematics*. This is remarkable given that the school has a normal distribution of students in terms of IQ and two-thirds of students come from areas designated deprived or highly deprived. With results like these one might expect Emmanuel College to be a pressured environment but the overriding impression I gained from observations over several days was of a very calm, secure, ordered, purposeful and encouraging environment. The emphasis on acting responsibly, considering others and contributing to the good of the whole school community was borne out by the survey of Year 9 and my observations. Students were considerate, courteous and polite at all times. 94% of students in Year 9 either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement 'Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views'. Students had respect for both each other and for authority; when a member of staff pointed out to an older boy that he needed to do his tie up, the exchange was courteous. The emphasis on character and respect for authority was not, however, at the expense of critical thinking and autonomy and 96% either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement: 'It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in'.

Reading Values in English and the Humanities at Emmanuel College

The importance of exploring and identifying different worldviews and engaging in dialogue and debate underpins the PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics) course at Emmanuel. The Head of PTE at Emmanuel College explained:

What we've introduced is a course which we feel develops skills and the knowledge that students have learned at GCSE level [in RE] post- 16 so that they are equipped to go into the world and face all sorts of things that the world is going to throw at them, worldviews, medical ethics, so the course itself is designed to equip students from a theological point of view, a philosophical point of view, from an ethical point of view, to deal with issues that they will encounter later in their life if not at present.

Emmanuel College seeks to enable students to understand Christian perspectives but encourages students to reach their own decisions by deliberating moral and ethical issues. The school teaches its students about the Christian faith and focuses on what is most relevant to the society in which they live:

We focused on those religions whose faiths are evident in our society here in Gateshead. We have a very strong Jewish community here so we spend time studying Judaism because a lot of our students live in area where there is a strong Jewish community so they see Orthodox Jews walking in the streets; they will ask questions about why do they dress in the way that they do. A lot of curiosity and interest in their neighbours, and quite often what we find is that they're grossly misinformed...and it's very important to correct those wrong understandings and that's why we focus on Judaism.

As might be expected in a Christian-ethos school, there is an emphasis at Emmanuel College upon teaching students about the Christian faith. The Head of PTE justified this in terms of its cultural importance:

Part of the reason we teach Christianity [in RE] has to do with the fact that this is a culture, a society that is built upon Christian values... What we have forgotten is the roots of our culture and many of our young people come to school and quite honestly have never seen a Bible before let alone know how to use it.

The point is a valid one, for biblical illiteracy will not help young people understand the culture in which they live and the influences upon it, or its literary heritage (Pike, 2003). In English lessons at Emmanuel biblical texts appeared to be used occasionally as an intertextual resource, a recommended practice in English education (Pike, 2002) and this was observed in a lesson on Shakespeare's *Richard III*. A difficulty with this play is that some adolescents

appear to revel in the violence and deceit they see in Richard III and the teacher interviewed considered it to be important for students to appreciate that this character was contravening Judeo-Christian moral commandments. Bringing such a moral perspective to bear upon a play such as *Richard III* is entirely justified and can play a valuable role in children's spiritual and moral development.

The Principal, Jonathan Winch, explained that, 'a responsible teacher will help young people to come to terms with the reality of the human condition' and 'to confront prejudice, and to confront stereotype and to be able to understand that we were created for a purpose very different than simply pursuing our own ends'. Teachers at Emmanuel College have the opportunity to explore Christian perspectives on education as part of an MA in Education, and this course was open to teachers from other ESF schools, but was only one strand of the provision for teacher education and, according to the Principal, 'there are a significant number of teachers at Emmanuel who would not call themselves Christians' who are nevertheless supportive of its ethos.

The emphasis upon social justice and the alleviation of suffering (with the accompanying challenge to students concerning what they will do and how they will improve society) is congruent with the emphasis at Emmanuel College on 'giving' rather than 'taking'. Making a positive contribution, one of the five aims of *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2005) is clearly addressed here. The emphasis upon service, rather than selfishness, may be viewed as 'Christian' but many non-Christians support and endorse the school's moral climate where social justice is taken seriously.

Emmanuel College challenges students both intellectually and morally. The inclusion, respect and tolerance it demonstrates is founded in a clear Christian ethos that provides a rationale and justification for its approach. The College gains outstanding results and 93% of 14-year-olds 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that 'Teachers want us to do our best' yet the College also understands that education is about more than results. In the words of Professor Richard Pring, formerly the Head of the Department of Education at Oxford University, schooling should foster 'moral seriousness' and encourage young people 'to think seriously about loyalties and commitments' (Pring, 2001, p.111). Emmanuel College certainly takes its moral task seriously but it also provides a calm and secure environment in which students can enjoy learning.

Bradford Christian School: Aims and Identity

Unlike the schools belonging to the Emmanuel Schools Foundation that serve a local community regardless of faith, Bradford Christian School's primary aim is to provide Christian nurture for the children of Christian families. While the other English schools in this study provide only for the secondary age range, Bradford Christian School educates children between the ages of four and sixteen. The aim of Bradford Christian School (BCS) is:

'To assist parents as they seek to fulfil the biblical mandate to nurture their children in the knowledge of God'

(Aim 1, Bradford Christian School Prospectus)

A school's aims are not always those of its parents and so seventeen short interviews with parents were recorded at the beginning and end of one school day, mainly in the school playground, to investigate why parents had chosen this particular school for their children. All of the interviews were 1:1 and parents were generally very willing to explain why they had chosen Bradford Christian School for their children. Only three of the twenty parents approached declined saying they were in a rush or were 'microphone-shy'. 11 of the interviews were with mums and 7 of the interviews were with dads who were dropping off or collecting children. The consistency in the reasons given, in relation to the school's stated aim, is striking. The answers below provide a valuable 'snap shot' of parents' views when they were asked why they sent their children to Bradford Christian School:

Well the main reason is because of the Bible content and the learning about God. But also in a mainstream school I feel that they'd be lost in numbers and, you know, statistics, whereas at this school, Bradford Christian School, they learn who they are and what they are and what God wants them to be. God isn't just on a Sunday is he, he's in every part of our lives whether it be Maths, Physics, PE, he's to do with all our lives isn't he?

(BCS dad, Interview 1)

I know that what my husband and I are starting at home with our children, the education and the nurturing in the ways of God that we are endeavouring to bring our children up in at home, that that continues in the classroom. It's just such a natural thing for me that God is just so much a part of my children's day at school as well, that the teachers are Christians, that if any issues or any problems or any joys, anything that comes up that we can share it and talk about it from a Christian perspective'.

(BCS mum, Interview 2)

I've been a Christian for over thirty years and I've always wanted my children to have this relationship with God and so therefore I decided when I heard about the Christian school so I wanted my children to attend obviously. Then I came to a meeting and I found out what it was about,

and until now I've never regretted, they've always been very happy at this Bradford Christian School and I'm really pleased about it

(BCS dad, Interview 3)

Firstly I send my children to Bradford Christian School because it is a Christian school and I want my children to be educated in the beliefs that we follow. And secondly, it's because at this school they don't just look at the children's education, they look at the personal growth and they help them along the way with that.

(BCS mum, Interview 4)

The Christian values that we teach at home we wanted to follow through in their schooling and we want it to be a part of their schooling... we want them to live their lives with a good Christian outlook and we want them to know right from wrong and we want what we instil in the home to follow through in their daily life.

(BCS mum, Interview 5)

Our Christian beliefs are very important to us, and the chance to send (our children) to a Christian school where there's a Christian emphasis, a consistency that carried on from home into school.... Christianity is all about your whole life, not just about Sunday and we just loved the atmosphere here, we loved the smaller classrooms and class sizes. And the teachers as well have a real desire and passion to teach not just across the educational spectrum but with Christian values as well, and that's the reason, the main reason we chose to send our children here.

(BCS mum, Interview 6)

I am a Christian, I believe in the Bible, we try our best to lead our lives according to God's words and I think that my little girl is getting here a stable education that brings a balance between what we believe is right, with God's word, and at the same time as with just normal life... I want her to know the truth about life and about the world and what we believe and about what God says what this world is all about. So she's learning about earth and geography and light but always with an understanding of what God says first about all those things....I would argue that if I've got a chance for her to hear it more than just once a week then that's fantastic. And if she can hear more than just the parents then that's even better because that just makes the whole thing more complete and it just makes it more real to her as well, it's not just from the parents, it's from different people as well. So for me it makes sense to send her in a school that will support our beliefs

(BCS mum, Interview 7)

I've got a little girl, she's 10, I like the quality of the school and I think that the school takes a holistic approach to her and to the children. And I think it's very personal. I like the class sizes and I like the fact that it's a Christian school ...I just think it's a good foundation for her.

(BCS mum, Interview 8)

We are devout Christians and we feel the best thing that we could give [our sons] as a start to life was a Christian upbringing. And, to be honest, I mean the school [our eldest son] went to in his first year was C of E [Church of England] but they weren't doing Christian things even at the C of E school. So we want them to have a good Christian education. So they get subjects in this like devotion and they also mix with a community of people that tend to be likeminded. A Christian school isn't exclusive in that sense, in the sense that there are people who aren't practising Christians that send their children there but they, for the most part, are likeminded Christians. So it's for that reason to have a good Christian upbringing that supplements what they have at church...and finishing off, on the academic standards, the cherry on the top of the cake really is that the academic standards of the school are very good too and that results in excellent exam grades there, definitely towards the top end of Bradford schools' results and I think one of the reasons for that is the smaller class sizes
(BCS dad, Interview 9)

This is a Christian school and that's very important for me about how my daughter grow up and about her morality. And I think that's very important. And then my daughter learns about the religion, the right religion. But the important thing is my daughter grow up in a right direction and after that the education is very important for her future, for everybody.
(BCS mum, Interview 10)

The children are brought up in the way of the Bible...they learn the English, Maths and Science at this school as well but it gets taught in a Christian way with the Christian ethic behind it, and I don't think you get the same sort of rounded education that the children get here in a normal state school.
(BCS dad, Interview 11)

I've got two children at the school, well I did have, [my daughter] has just left [she] came to the school 3 years ago, she was struggling a little bit where she was at the big secondary school where she was, she just wasn't thriving I think the main thing I could catch from the problems that she was having. So I brought her into this environment and since she's been here she's thrived, she's done really well with her GCSEs, far exceeded the results she was intending to get at the school she was at, so I was so pleased with hers...how she's got on and now she's doing really well at college, that when it was time for [my son] to start school there was really no question... he's in Year 2 and just loving it, got some lovely friends and getting really strong in his faith and it's a lovely family environment and he's thriving, so I'm pleased, yeah.... I think it's nurturing, and it's loving and I think it's just what children need and I think probably that's what's lacking in a lot of schools now, it's very results based, it's very success based, whereas here it's just bringing out what's in the children - all different.
(BCS mum, Interview 12)



Sir Peter Vardy interviewed
by Dr Mark Pike at the University
of Leeds

Ian Brew, Principal of
Trinity Academy speaking
at the University of Leeds



Trinity Academy's Dr Julie
McGonigle, Vice Principal for
Teaching and Learning, speaking
at the University of Leeds



Jonathan Winch,
Principal of Emmanuel College at the
Faith in the Academy Conference
speaking at the University of Leeds





'Question Time' at the *Faith in the Academy* Conference at the University of Leeds. From left to right: Gwyneth Evans, Jonathan Winch, Ian Brew, Julie McGonigle and Mark Pike

Professor Geoffrey Walford (Oxford University) and Dr Arthur Jones (WYSOCS) at the *Faith in the Academy* Conference



Ian Brew, Principal of Trinity Academy at the *Faith in the Academy* Conference

Gwyneth Evans, Secondary Principal of Bede Academy, at the *Faith in the Academy* Conference





Core Values etched in the glass wall surrounding the study area at Trinity Academy



Front entrance of Trinity Academy



Entrance Hall and Reception Area to Trinity Academy



Trinity Academy





Jacobus Fruytier Christian College,
Apeldoorn, The Netherlands

The playground at Bradford
Christian School



Henk Westerink (Jacobus Fruytier),
Mark Pike (Leeds University)
and Phill Moon (Bradford Christian
School)

Noah's Ark at
Bradford Christian School



I want them to have a Christian upbringing basically, and it's small classes and it's ideal for what they need
(BCS mum, Interview 13)

I'm a parent of 2 teenagers at the school in Year 8 and Year 11... I want them to be not only educated academically but I want them to be somewhere where character is important and where they learn who they are in God, who they are in God... It's important that they know that they were born for a purpose, that they are fearfully and wonderfully made, that God has a plan for their lives and that they have giftings that are unique to them, whether that's academic giftings or practical giftings that... the way they were made, the things they're good at is not a mistake but it's a plan and... God has a place for them to use their giftings whatever those giftings are... they see that God is the source of everything, that every subject has God at the centre and that it all fits together, Maths fits together with Art and every other subject because God is at the centre of it and they see God's characteristics in each subject area.
(BCS mum, Interview 14)

Strong belief's a big part ...I want them to emphasize on the Christian faith, and that's where this school will come into play
(BCS dad, Interview 15)

Well I think this is the best school for my children, I've got two actually, one in Year 5 and one is in Year 1, because this school not only teaches academics but they also teach the Bible way of living. So I am a Christian and I want my kids to lead the life that is Bible way. So it is taught in this school and I can see the difference in my children compared to other children who are not in Christian school. So that is the main reason for me.
(BCS dad, Interview 16)

I've got one daughter who is still at this school, she is in Year 9, another daughter and a son who's left, who are now 18 and 20 but they've gone through the school here as well. I just really wanted them to be at a school where the values and the morals and the way that the teachers treat them is the same as what I want for them to learn, so that it corresponds with what we're doing at home and there's no conflicts there. So I really value the fact that they actually....at this school they're receiving a Christian foundation.
(BCS mum, Interview 17)

Clearly these parents are committed to providing their children with Christian nurture. How are the aims and activities of such parents to be viewed? In *The God Delusion* by Richard Dawkins such aims are likened to 'child abuse':

How much do we regard children as being the property of their parents? It's one thing to say people should be free to believe whatever they like, but should they be free to impose their beliefs on their children? Is there

something to be said for society stepping in? What about bringing up children to believe manifest falsehoods? Isn't it always a form of child abuse to label children as possessors of beliefs that they are too young to have thought out?
(Dawkins, 2006, p. 315)

Of course, children always have to be taught something before their critical faculties are fully developed and they make up their own minds. We always have a starting point and to assume that an atheistic or comprehensively liberal starting point is somehow more neutral than a Christian one is illogical. A rather different view to that of Dawkins is taken by Elmer Thiessen in *Teaching for Commitment* (1993) who considers Christian nurture to be quite normal, in that parenting necessarily involves teaching children how to live and what to believe:

Christian parents and teachers (and religious parents and teachers generally) who frankly admit that they want their children to grow up to become Christians are perhaps more honest than most. After all, how would a liberal agnostic parent really feel if his or her child autonomously chose to become a committed Christian? And how about the atheistic parents who, in the interest of a liberal upbringing, faithfully take their children to Sunday school (but never enter a church door themselves) so that the children can choose for themselves? What message do the children really get? We all know that actions speak louder than words. What are the real intentions of these parents, particularly from a child's perspective? I would suggest that there is a certain "evangelistic" intent in all forms of upbringing and teaching. It is just that religious parents are a little more honest about their intentions. (Thiessen, 1993, p. 140)

Parents who send their children to Bradford Christian School might be regarded as 'conscientious objectors' to a secular state system that promotes a secular outlook. Indeed, many Church of England schools (see Interview 9 above) are ruled out by these parents because they are considered too secular and regarded as only nominally Christian. Certainly, the degree of agreement between the home and the school can produce a particularly effective partnership and, rather than considering this to be 'child abuse', Ofsted's view of Bradford Christian School in 2007 was very positive:

The school provides good education for its pupils. It is strongly committed to building a partnership with parents, to ensure the pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and life beyond school. Teaching is good and the curriculum is broadly balanced and effectively meets pupils' needs.... Pupils are well cared for. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding, as is their spiritual and moral development
(Ofsted report January 2007)

In addition to the seventeen short interviews with parents I interviewed Dr S (a surgeon) and Mrs S (a nurse) who have two daughters, aged six and sixteen, at Bradford Christian School. The extracts from the interview below illustrate the difference between providing

security and a stable identity for a child in the primary years (as a result of the school being a 'home from home' rather than a place where mixed messages are received) and fostering the autonomy and personal decision-making of a teenager:

Mrs S: We chose BCS for our daughter [currently aged 6] primarily because of its pastoral care content. Our 6-year-old daughter... was an abandoned baby... Having chosen the school we're just delighted that her relationship with God, as young and as immature as it is, is nonetheless a real relationship, it's being nurtured... and she is even now getting some understanding of her identity in God, which for us is even more important than her identity as our child.

Dr S: It is very important to us that our children have their own faith and make up their own minds about what they do and they don't believe, but we are very much of the conviction that there is no neutral place and by them being in a state school they're actually in a place where effectively they're being fed secular... well most often, fed some sort of forms of secular humanism, as we see it... so in that respect, we would rather them be in a place where they're hearing what we believe to be the truth. Nevertheless, we understand the importance of them knowing the different arguments for and against the things that we believe and that is something we are very pleased with about BCS. Our impression is that people and the children are being taught what other people believe ... in their ethics classes they hear arguments for and against certain issues, so that I don't believe there is any degree of brainwashing ... I think they are in a balanced environment but very importantly to us they are in a place where they are being fed the truth as well.

Mrs S: We have two older children, a 21-year-old and a 19-year-old, who have both ... who each have their own strong Christian faith ... I think ultimately, you know, Christianity is actually a faith that puts the onus on the individual with God, and therefore you can't actually sort of... you cannot be a Christian, a true Bible believing Christian, unless it is your own faith ... and so a parent can't indoctrinate a child into real faith because then it's not real faith, it has to be a living relationship of your own for it to be a real true Christian ... faith. What I'm trying to say is I think ultimately a child from a Christian home that decides that they want to continue in that faith has at some point to make a decision for themselves, whether they go to a Christian school or not ... I do think it is really helpful to be in an environment where the school is supporting and endorsing the parents.

Dr S: Whereas our 6-year-old daughter hasn't actually had any choice ... she has just been placed in the school from day one, our 16-year-old actually chose to go to the school. It was only when (our youngest daughter) was introduced to the school that she later on, what Year 8 or 9, she ... (our 16-year-old) herself said, "Oh, can I go there as well?" So,

it's been a place where there is no sense ... that she's been indoctrinated into her faith, because she actually had faith before going to the Christian school, and she wanted to be in an environment that was going to be encouraging her

The difference between the educational needs of a six-year-old and a sixteen-year-old is evident from the interview with Mr and Mrs S and substantiates the view that Christian nurture aims for a 'free and independent response to the claims of the Christian gospel' (Thiessen, 1993, p.139). Phill Moon, the Headteacher of Bradford Christian School explained his commitment to promoting 'autonomy via faith' (McLaughlin, 1984, p.79) as part of Christian nurture:

We do respect the autonomy of each child to make their own decisions, in fact I would really avoid seeking any glib or trite profession of faith...we just give them the opportunity to think, to listen, to hear, to discuss and debate and then make their own choices... A lot of the textbooks of course are available to them would not reflect a Christian worldview because they are not written from that perspective by the authors.

This 'opportunity to think, to listen, to hear, to discuss and debate' was appreciated by the group of fourteen-year-olds I interviewed who gave their perceptions of the differences between their previous state schools and the environment at Bradford Christian School. The focus group felt strongly that their Christian school offered them more freedom than schools where comprehensively liberal and secular values formed an orthodoxy that they did not feel able to challenge. One student explained:

People say that you can't express your opinion in a Christian school because they force Christian views on you, but that's not true because... it's the other way around, this school kind of encourages you to express your opinion and that's the main thing of the school and my old primary school they kept saying things like, "We all know evolution is true, we all know this is ok, we all know that that's okay" and I was like: "Well, I don't think..." and everyone was kind of agreeing... and you didn't have the opportunity to like say, "No I don't think that".

When asked what it was like to be in such an environment, students indicated that they felt unable to challenge a secular orthodoxy and clearly believed they were denied a voice because assumptions were presented as incontrovertible facts:

You felt forced to keep your head down and just keep your mouth shut...It made you feel stupid... you know they kind of put it across as a fact ... it's almost like saying, "We all know that this is wood" [tapping bench]... they kind of just said it like that and you didn't have an opportunity to express your opinion, which is completely different to this school, which is one of the reasons why I like it (Bradford Christian School) so much.

One specific example given by a student concerned whether homosexuality was viewed as a morally acceptable alternative lifestyle by a school. It appeared that the student's previous school had been keen to stress that homosexuality was morally acceptable when the student felt that this was not the case:

In my primary school, they kept telling me it was okay to be gay...

It should be pointed out here that tolerance and respect in a cohesive society is entirely compatible with disagreement and that it is possible to behave respectfully, courteously and considerately to those with whom one profoundly disagrees about important matters such as sexual morality. Jews, Muslims and Christians may exercise tolerance and demonstrate respect for friends or work colleagues who are homosexual even though they may consider their sacred texts to prohibit such conduct. We should remember that to believe that homosexuality is not a morally acceptable alternative lifestyle is not necessarily to be homophobic.

One student also indicated that assumptions were made in his previous school about his views concerning human origins and that the option to differ from the orthodox position of 'believing in' evolution, seemed to be unavailable to him:

They kept saying, "We all know evolution is true" and things like you know... assuming it to be true. You always find that like with Dr Vicary [Head of Science at Bradford Christian School], when he's talking about creation he says: "I believe that, I think that because of this... I believe for myself that, but I'm not sure what you guys think but I think that"... Dr Vicary particularly doesn't say, "Well we all know that creation is true". He just kind of says: "I think that creation is true", which is a different viewpoint because you then can... well personally I feel if I had a different opinion I could say, well I don't think that, you know...

Phill Moon, The Headteacher of Bradford Christian School pointed out that all schooling answers fundamental questions about the human condition and that the approach at his school was coherent as it was founded upon a 'biblical understanding of reality':

My observation is that no education is neutral. Schools represent the values of the people that are in them and that holds true for individual teachers in individual classes... and so we're just being...honest about our worldview and where it comes from, what our values are, and we feel that the curriculum with it's 15,000 hours... we really want to engage with our children during all of those hours and have them really look at the epistemological questions that all education seeks to answer: Where do I come from? What are my origins? What's of value? What's my significance? What's my future? What's wrong with the world around me? What are the answers? And I believe education seeks to answer all those questions from the different perspectives that people work from. Our view is coherent; it's based on a biblical understanding of reality... We

will look at the views and values of people around us, we don't educate in a vacuum, we know that society influences us and the values that are kind of transmitted, that our children pick up. We know school is not the only place where they learn things and absorb things and assimilate things

Clearly this has implications for the curriculum and parents sometimes made specific reference to the value of integrating Christian rather than secular humanist perspectives into the curriculum, which is often referred to by secular liberal educationists as a sign of a 'strong' rather than 'moderate' faith school (McDonough, 1998). Explicit reference is made to this in Bradford Christian School's prospectus:

We feel that a Christian worldview has important contributions to make in all curriculum areas. Although the existence of God is not necessarily denied, we feel that the present secular climate is failing children in their education for life, because it communicates the message that God has nothing relevant to say about the way the world is or about how we should live... our research for curriculum design will draw on a wide range of Christian scholarship... We would hope that young people in their middle and senior years will be able to describe, understand and challenge ungodly assumptions held by our culture... Our programmes of study will also enable children to meet the attainment targets of the core and foundation subjects of the National Curriculum
(BCS Prospectus, 'Curriculum' p.6)

Reading Values in English and the Humanities at Bradford Christian School

When I asked 14-year-old students at Bradford Christian School about their reading they explained to me that although their teachers were all Christians there were many issues about which they disagreed. They explained that just as their parents had diverse views about J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, so did their teachers:

- Student: Well, the other day we were talking about this in Drama, with the Drama teacher, because we were doing a book called *The Crucible* and that was all about how they discovered witches in a town and stuff and we kind of debated for a while if *Harry Potter* was right for a Christian to watch or not... but we kind of came to the conclusion that it's all about your views on what you see as sin and what you don't see as sin, and basically what Mr H was trying to say to us was, You can watch Narnia, then why can't you watch *Harry Potter*? Because Narnia is like mythical creatures and that sort of things as well, so...
- Dr Pike: Whose parents have pretty strong views against *Harry Potter*? Let's hear what their view is then. So, why wouldn't they want you to read it?
- Student: No, they're trying to ... because it's like witchcraft and stuff they don't want me to watch it because... well I wouldn't want to watch it anyways because I don't see what's good about it, to be honest, just looking at it I don't see what's so good about it... so...
- Dr Pike: I want us to really think here, okay? You mentioned witchcraft, okay? In the Old Testament King Saul goes to the Witch of Endor...
- Student: What's this?
- Dr Pike: In the Old Testament, in the Bible, King Saul goes to the Witch of Endor... my point is that there are witches in the Bible, so you just talked about not reading *Harry Potter* because it has witches in it, yeah? And I'm saying to you this school believes in the Bible and there's a story in the Old Testament where one of the kings of Israel goes to a witch, so that's what I wanted to ask you about. Yeah?
- Student: I have read the first book and I've watched a few of the films and like the reason I have a strong view against it is because, not because it has witchcraft in it but because it's portrayed in a wrong way, you know, in the Bible and in other places you know witches are kind of perceived as devil worshipping hags, if you know what I mean, its like.. really evil people and that's kind of like a good view... whereas in the film *Harry Potter* they're kind of portraying them as normal people, they're good people...
- Dr Pike: So you've made a distinction then that in *Harry Potter* witches do good things and a biblical view would be that witches do evil things, so it's the perspective on the witch.
- Student: That's pretty much what we said, it's your perspective on it.

The readiness to distinguish the authorial viewpoint or moral standpoint (although they didn't use these terms) of texts is evidence of critical reading. The Headteacher of Bradford Christian School who teaches English also advocated critical reading when asked whether

certain books might be banned or censored in his school:

Banning books and censorship? An interesting one, censorship... we know that our students read all manner of books. You're probably thinking about how would we treat the Harry Potter books in our school. I think you just have to acknowledge that they're probably the biggest literary phenomenon in the last decade. Our students read those books. We just recognize that there is a whole breadth of views that people hold about them...So, we will look at those books and we will try to critique what they are about, what motivates the characters, the writer. And again rather than say ban books and censor books, I think we'd say, let's look at why this book is controversial in its time. We are happy to do it with Thomas Hardy from 150 years ago. We need to bring the same critical evaluation to books that our students pick up off the bookshelves written last year, Phillip Pullman books. My aim is to educate children in my English classes where they are critically able to evaluate the literature... and I know that there are all sorts of processes that go on between the text, myself as the reader and my students come to their own conclusions.

The Head of Bradford Christian School explained, 'We are quite clear that we are working from a biblical worldview throughout the curriculum' although he acknowledged 'that a lot of the teachers that come to work with us in the school haven't necessarily thought through their subjects or their approaches to teaching from a Christian perspective'. In the History lessons observed at Bradford Christian School there was, however, clear evidence of 'faith-learning integration' (Glanzer, 2008). This may have been more pronounced because students were learning about William Wilberforce but it is interesting to note, by way of comparison, that in the Christian-ethos Trinity Academy, where I also observed lessons on William Wilberforce, there was little or no reference to his Christian faith or what motivated him in the campaign for the abolition of slavery. The lesson at BCS began with an introduction by the teacher (formerly Head of History in a Catholic High School):

OK William Wilberforce, have the sheet in front of you. This, I have to say, is one of the most amazing men I have ever read about. Really, honestly, I have just been reading about him, I've been so blessed by reading about this amazing man. OK, William Wilberforce then, he fought for the abolition of the African slave trade against slavery itself until they were both illegal in the British Empire, but it took 40 years....40 years, so it took most of his life to fight this battle. I think that's just amazing, 40 years to fight that battle. The defeats and set backs that he suffered along the way would have caused an ordinary person, an ordinary politician to give in, they really would have done. The case was defeated 11 times - that means he said "let's abolish the slave trade" and all the other MPs said "no we're not" 11 times.

So what motivated this amazing man? What on earth kept him going for 40 years? Is he crazy? What was it? Have a look at Sources 1, 2 and 3 and answer that question for me. Do it on a sheet. 1, 2 and 3, read each one. What does each Source say motivated him? If you read Source 1 what does it say motivated him? If you read Source 2 what does it say motivated him? Read Source 3, what does it say motivated him?

Students were asked the following questions about the three sources:

1. What motivated this amazing man? Look at the sources....
2. Which of the sources do you think is the most reliable? Why?

Source 1

“The abolitionist Thomas Clarkson had an enormous influence on Wilberforce. He and others were campaigning for an end to the trade in which British ships were carrying black slaves from Africa, in terrible conditions, to the West Indies as goods to be bought and sold. Wilberforce was persuaded to lobby for the abolition of the slave trade and for 18 years he regularly introduced anti-slavery motions in parliament.” (BBC website: Historic Figures)

Source 2

“William Wilberforce was horrified by the evidence collected on the slave trade, he worked to put this evidence before MP’s in the House of Commons”

(Citizenship Foundation 2008)

Source 3

“God Almighty has placed before me one great object, the suppression of the Slave trade”
(The Diary of William Wilberforce, Oct 1787)

So far this lesson could easily have taken place in a secular, state school but looking at the teacher’s plan and the rest of the lesson the differences become apparent. The Learning Objective on the teacher’s plan was: ‘To understand the role of William Wilberforce in the abolition of the Slave Trade and to acknowledge that without appreciating his faith we cannot fully understand this historical figure’. What also appears on the plan, however, was a ‘Spiritual Concept’ that was to appreciate how one man can make a difference and to consider what it is about this Christian man that can be learned from.

The intention here was to communicate that Wilberforce was influenced by his faith and to ask students which aspects of Wilberforce’s character they were particularly inspired by. In class, students collected ‘qualities of Wilberforce’ and matched each one to a Bible verse in order ‘to illustrate what a godly man Wilberforce was’.

Characteristics of Wilberforce (teacher's notes)

1. "No man has a right to be idle. Where is it that in such a world as this, health, and leisure and affluence may not find some ignorance to instruct, some wrong to redress, some want to supply, some misery to alleviate?" (Wilberforce)
Wilberforce was sad about the "shapeless idleness" of his past
(Matthew 5:16)
2. "Their slight notions of guilt and evil of sin show an utter lack of reverence to the Divine Majesty" (Wilberforce)
(Psalm 111:10) Fear of the Lord
3. "By careful management, I should be able to give at least one-quarter of my income to the poor" (Wilberforce)
(2 Corinthians 9:7) Generous
4. 'After walking about the Square once or twice before I could persuade myself, I called upon old Newton – was much affected in conversing with him – something very pleasing and unaffected in him. When I came away I found my mind in a calm, tranquil state, more humbled, and looking more devoutly up to God' (Wilberforce)
Proverbs (13:1) Seeking guidance/fellowship
5. He would spend his days studying about 9 or 10 hours a day, typically breakfasting alone, taking walks alone, dining with the family and other guests but not joining them in the evening until he had read his Bible. The Bible became his best loved book and he learned stretches of it by heart
(Deut 6: 6-9) Knowing Bible
6. Wilberforce struggled for a year trying to decide whether to stay as a politician or become a preacher. Whilst in a field praying and giving thanks he reported: "amidst the general chorus with which all nature seems on such a morning to be swelling the song of praise and thanks-giving, I awakened as if from a dream with a reason to live" God had answered his prayers.
(1 Thessalonians 5:17-18) Praying
7. 'The Grand object of my parliamentary existence is the abolition of the slave trade. Before this great cause all others dwindle in my eyes, and I must say that the *certainly* that I am *right* here, helps enormously. If it please God to honour me so far, may I be the instrument of stopping such a course of wickedness and cruelty as never before disgraced a Christian country.'
(Proverbs 3:5-6) Faithfulness
8. "Oh Lord Purify my soul from all its stains. Warm my heart with the love of thee, animate my sluggish nature and fix my inconstancy and volatility, that I may not be weary in well doing".
Prayer in 1800 when he was 41
(Galatians 6:9)

Such faith-learning integration and the inclusion of a 'spiritual concept' in lessons is a feature of some Christian schools and Bradford Christian School fits the description of a 'strong' faith school in that it 'denies a division between the sacred and the secular' or the possibility of 'compartmentalizing knowledge' (Burtonwood, 2006, p. 80). At Bradford Christian School the integration of Christian perspectives across the curriculum is an important aspect of the school's identity. For instance, the youngest children in the school do not embark upon the usual secular topic 'Me, Myself and I' when they write (and draw) their first autobiographical pieces of work. Instead, they work on 'The Potter and the Clay' and write or draw about the mummy, garden, bedroom, house, cat and so on that God has given them. At this school, writing about one's identity without reference to God is considered to teach the children the lesson that God is irrelevant to their lives.

Bradford Christian School is affiliated to the Christian Schools Trust (Baker and Freeman, 2005) and its Headteacher is a member of the national executive of this organization. As part of the research project I attended three days of the Christian Schools Trust (CST) teacher training course during the summer holidays which was led by David Freeman, another member of the national executive of the CST and a former Headteacher of The Kings School, Witney. The emphasis while I was present was upon 'faith-learning' integration and developing ways of applying Christian perspectives to various subjects, topics or areas of the curriculum.

According to McDonough (1998) a 'strong' identity school also seeks 'to foster a separate education of extensive scope and duration that is meant to ensure that children adhere to a distinct ancestral identity throughout their lives' and a feature of such schools is that they 'seek to advance a separate education affirming and reinforcing the identity of the group in question' (McDonough, 1998, p. 464). While Bradford Christian School's curriculum might conform to the description of a 'strong' school, the Headteacher's perspective on being 'separate' indicates that it does not fit the definition of a 'strong' school in its admission policy:

We became separate if you like to forge a separate...a different kind of approach to education and in our early days and in the early days of many of the Christian schools in this country, in the new schools movement going back twenty, twenty-five years, I think in those early days we valued the independence that not having state funding gave us. Now that we've developed our approaches, now that we are seeing the kind of students that we're producing, we feel that they're good British citizens as well as good Christians. Even if students leave the school and aren't Christians we still think they are very positive members of society. As the schools have become more recognisable and established we are finding that all sorts of people, not necessarily from a Christian background or from a Christian persuasion, are choosing the schools... choosing to put their children with us. But of course we also keep our costs very low, our fees very low, because we want ordinary families on ordinary incomes to be able to afford to send their children with us... We know that some of our parents in the local community who are not Christians would put their

children with us in the school if the issue of funding was resolved, we already do have a quarter of our school body from non-Christian homes. We would love to make the school available to more children, Christian and non-Christian.

In terms of admissions, Bradford Christian Schools might be considered 'moderate', for such schools are more open to ideas and people not belonging to the predominant group in a school although they still maintain the value of their own particular identity. The 'moderate-strong' classification is important because many commentators consider that the state should not fund 'strong' identity schools but that it may, subject to certain conditions, fund 'moderate' schools. Reflecting about whether CST schools were 'moderate' or 'strong', David Freeman explained:

I would say that most of our schools are falling into the strong identity but they are not restricting membership only to individuals who are from their particular 'school'. Christian schools are very much wide open to all sorts of people from all sorts of backgrounds.

This is certainly true of Bradford Christian School where the Headteacher estimates 25% of students to be from non-Christian homes. Indeed, given additional funding Phil Moon would be pleased to welcome more children from the local area who are from non-Christian families providing they are supportive of the school's ethos. Yet wanting to nurture children in the Christian faith is also an important aim. As David Freeman put it:

"to pass on their way of life to their children", that is part of what we're into

This was not, however, considered to be indoctrinatory in the pejorative sense or to render critical faculties redundant. David Freeman was very clear on this point:

I also think that we don't want them not to subject their own traditions to critical review. I think part of training our children is to help them to stand back and look at their faith critically, and if it's real faith it will stand up to that

These findings are especially valuable because they demonstrate that many Christian schools do not easily fit into the categories of 'Moderate' or 'Strong' of McDonough (1998). These categories appear insufficiently discriminating and do not recognize some of the complexity of Christian schooling. Bradford Christian School fits aspects of McDonough's 'strong' category but not others. Evidence from interviews with David Freeman, Phil Moon, parents and teachers, indicates that this school is not 'meant to ensure' children graduate as Christians for they have no power to 'ensure' faith when freewill decisions are vital. Instead, these schools seek to nurture children in the Christian faith because they know that young people must use their freewill and critical faculties to autonomously choose faith in Christ.

As Bradford Christian School fosters critical thinking and reading, gains excellent GCSE examination results and has an excellent Ofsted report – and is considered vital by parents

– questions need to be asked about why it is not given more support by the state in a liberal democracy. If Christian parents can only be ‘conscientious objectors’ to secularism by buying themselves out of the state system then many of them will be denied this opportunity on economic grounds. While Bradford Christian School could ‘opt in’ to the state sector, the strings attached to receiving state funding would impose changes to its admissions and recruitment policies that would undermine its ability to be so distinctively Christian. If Christian parents wish to prevent their children’s ‘conscription’ into the secular system of schooling and believe they must provide a Christian education for their children this is supported in law.

The UK’s Human Rights Act (1998) which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights states that ‘the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions’ (UK Parliament, 1998, Schedule 1 Part 2 Article 2) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights allows parents ‘the right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children’ (Article 26/3). It would appear that Christian parents who are good citizens and wish to send their children to Bradford Christian School for religious reasons are being discriminated against on religious grounds within a secular society.

Jacobus Fruytier Christian College: Aims and Identity

I was privileged to be able to spend two days collecting data at Jacobus Fruytier in Apeldoorn in The Netherlands, interviewing students and teachers and observing lessons. The school is similar in size to the academies of the ESF but serves Dutch Reformed families and is fully state funded. The school has links with Bradford Christian School in England and 14-year-old students from the two schools participate in an annual exchange. Jacobus Fruytier College (JF) and Bradford Christian School (BCS) were both instigated or founded by Christian parents who were dissatisfied with secular education and wanted a Christian education for their children:

'The school was started in 1984 as the result of the wish of many parents to have their children educated in a way that suited the Christian confession'
(Jacobus Fruytier Brochure, p. 6)

'We live in a secularized society... It is important to provide our students with the resources to behave as Christians in a post-modern environment'
(Jacobus Fruytier Brochure, p. 7)

There is an emphasis upon the 'cultivation and building of character' (p. 7) at the school and reference is made to 'God's demand to raise children in the way of His institutions' (p.6). At Jacobus Fruytier students follow the national curriculum but I was told by Henk van Sorge, 'We have also, for 20%, own freedom which is obligatory in our school, filled in by the norms and values and the message that we have from our source of faith, the Bible and Jesus Christ'. He also explained:

I think in the Netherlands it is a matter of fact that we have Christian schools, we are accustomed to that and we get our sponsorship from the government and we have accepted it, want to protect it

In The Netherlands there is a well-established tradition of schools being publicly funded but privately led and managed:

'The Dutch government acknowledges the education at Jacobus Fruytier, which means that they also exert some influence over our central objectives'
(Jacobus Fruytier Brochure, p. 7)

Despite this 'influence' Jacobus Fruytier is still able to express its 'own ideological approach' and in a section of the prospectus entitled 'Aim of Education' we read:

Throughout the education we provide our students, our chief aim is to glorify God...As the infallible Word of God, the Bible is central in our education, reflecting the position it should hold in our hearts and lives... The specific task of the school is to educate our students in such a way

that they can use the gifts given them by God to take up their position in the family, church, and society

(Jacobus Fruytier Brochure, p.5)

Policy Objective 2 concerns the 'Environment' where the aim is 'to motivate each student and employee to use his own ambitions and abilities to the best of his power and to the glory of God'. Policy Objective 3 is 'High academic results' where the goal is 'to achieve the highest results possible for each student' and Policy Objective 4 is 'Internationalization' which involves building bridges with schools, teachers, and pupils in Europe and around the world'. The school describes its own identity in the following terms in Policy Objective 1:

Identity – to show our Reformed confession through the relationships between teachers and students, the subjects we choose to offer our students, and the teaching means we use to teach those subjects. We also hope that our students will be able to apply practically outside of school what they learn ideologically in our school

(Jacobus Fruytier Brochure, p.6)

The following 'Summary of Our Identity' is also given in the publication *Jacobus Fruytier Brochure - Bilingual Education Internationalization*:

God created everything perfectly, including mankind. God created man in His image, and man was able to worship and glorify God and to love his fellow man. Sadly, by the deliberate disobedience of man against God, sin came into the world, and man lost the ability to love God and his fellow man. Since this fall in Paradise, man is prone to evil. Death, the wages of sin, came into the world, making earthly life finite. Still, man is immortal with regard to his eternal destination: eternal life or eternal death. Redemption is only possible through conversion and a faith in Jesus Christ. In His mercy, God is able and willing to grant these through the essential work of the Holy Spirit. Man was placed in God's creation with a commission. As a steward he is responsible for God's creation and is obliged to serve his fellowmen and community.

The belief that 'man is made in God's image' and the implications of that belief was taken up in an interview with Henk van Sorge who explained:

The image of God is clearly shown in the man Jesus Christ. So although there are reflections of God's image in every human being, which we honour, we can call it, in terms of doctrine, God's common grace, we also know that man is sinful. But the way of restoration is Jesus Christ and if a pupil with his brokenness, with his sins... is reborn, we also want to appeal that that has consequences in daily life, what they call discipleship and what God wanted. ... God wants to restore his image in our lives. That is now broken down, they want to make it more and more clearly as a sculptor creates his statue, more and more you see the image as it

were of Jesus. And that is also what we want to make them realise, that although we are corrupted and should not be haughty, God wants to make a difference with your life personally and that you can live in redemption, that you can live as a new creature. And that's what God wants to make a start with on earth, he wants this, that's our responsibility. And also, even if you don't accept Jesus as the salt of your life, we believe that our pupils are still responsible and God asked "Where is my image?". So we are created to God's image, we didn't lose it at all.

When I asked what might happen in the school if a pupil was to express a contrary view to the view being presented by the teacher, for instance if the pupil were to say "Miss, we're not really sinners, human beings are quite good people", I was told:

Definitely we approach our students respectful and I would be very thankful for the openness of asking this kind of question in this way, because it makes clear that they think critically and I'm also sure that our teacher will ask further questions "Why do you think so?" so to make him realise that, 'Is it only something you think or do you also have a foundation for this?'... So I think that approach is respectful, thankful for his thinking and we don't say "You must think in our way" but we say "This is how we think and we have a clear understanding of why we think in the way we think". So it's not a sort of... it's not a totalitarian regime of our identity so to say, but.....and I think that most....a teacher should primarily should listen very carefully to the sources, to his identity, to the word of God but also to his pupils.

I also asked why, unlike in the schools in England (and even Bradford Christian School) children from non Dutch Reformed homes, were not allowed to attend the school. It was maintained that this policy was considered to be essential for protecting the identity of the school:

In the 20th century a lot of initially Christian schools of the 19th century faded regarding the identity because of first allowing all kinds of pupils later on as well, all kind of teachers regardless of their denomination, regardless of their identity, but then they had to compromise regarding how detailed we want to have our students in touch with our identity. And slightly on through the decades we see that these schools faded entirely regarding their identity. Now they ask themselves "Well are we actually a Christian school, why is there difference?". So the initial good ideas on it also in answer to the Scripture to educate your children in the ways of the Lord, faded completely. ... the Bible said that we should educate our children in the ways of the Lord and to protect that it is so important that we know there is a uniformity between families and the schools. School is as it were a continuing of the education at home, there should be a unity between it. ..as a consequence you don't have to allow other students....if there is no clear criteria then you will definitely bring yourself in a certain moment into the atmosphere of compromising more and more.

Nurture in the Christian faith at home or in school is not, however, judged to be indoctrination when children live in such a plural Dutch society where there are so many other influences upon them, not least that of the media. My question and the reply from Henk van Sorge where he notes that the 'windows to our society are open' are illustrative:

Mark Pike: So if you have a school with Reformed Christian teachers and children from Reformed Christian homes, you have this congruence, this joined up thinking, between the home and the school. Some people would criticise that separate education and would say "How are you going to prepare children for life after school when they will mix with people who don't share their beliefs and don't share their values?". So I want to ask you how you prepare children to be good citizens in a plural, Dutch society?

Henk van Sorge: Most of them have a television, all of them have Internet. So all the windows to our society are open but they are in this school. And the one thing as a school is the windows are open to our society that means they know what lives, they have to reach the same exam targets as every other student, that means that there is so much similarity with other schools....

Reading Values in English and the Humanities at Jacobus Fruytier College

The aim of teaching from a Christian perspective and integrating faith and learning throughout the curriculum at Jacobus Fruytier College was evidently influenced by Christian schools in the UK such as those belonging to the CST. Henk van Sorge referred to 'our visit to Liverpool (Christian Fellowship School) and Bradford (Bradford Christian School) where you see that they also wrestle and think of how to involve biblical topics throughout the curriculum' and to 'visiting English schools (of the CST) where we think it was more figured out, more worked out'. According to Henk van Sorge 'that process started in 2002/3/4 then we started to visit the English schools (CST) and that gave us the inspiration to bring Christian education throughout the curriculum'. Just as there might be a Citizenship Co-ordinator in some English schools who identifies where aspects of the Citizenship curriculum might be covered in different subjects, 'there is one staff member in this school who helps us to make it visible and to realise what contents regarding faith in particular are attached to which subject'.

Due to time constraints it was not possible to see many lessons at Jacobus Fruytier although I did have the opportunity to talk to some students (in English) about their reading. They thought that teachers would engage them in conversation if they read one of the Harry Potter books at school and might express concerns about them being influenced by the occult by doing so. When I asked Henk van Sorge how the school might respond to students who read the *Harry Potter* books, he explained:

We will definitely have a talk and speak with the pupil about the background and the stuff in it - definitely, yeah. It depends also on the age and the pupil but we think it is good to take care in Christian way of your pupils.

Like the students at Bradford Christian School the students at Jacobus Fruytier sought to identify the authorial viewpoint or the moral direction in which a work of literature inclines. One girl explained the difference between the *Harry Potter* books and the *Lord of the Rings*:

I think in the Lord of the Rings you are on the good side and they have to bring the ring to the place where it's made and people are bringing it to the place where it is made so they are good ones...but I say that's the difference between Harry Potter and therefore I think it's a good book and Harry Potter is not good because everything there is on the bad side.

When I asked students if they felt they were 'respectful and tolerant of people who have very different views to yours' I was told:

Yes I'm respectful but if it is possible I should explain my view and tell them what I think, but not to convert them with my opinion

It was also possible to discuss with Henk van Sorge whether he considered Jacobus Fruytier

to be a 'strong identity' school in McDonough's (1993) terms and he explained 'we hope that their education will affirm and reinforce the identity of the group of course, because we are Christians and want them to see the value of it themselves' but although Jacobus Fruytier was 'mainly a strong school':

That doesn't mean that we are uncritical at all, we are critical as well and want them to consider things for themselves, to be honest with themselves but we hope of course, and we are very clear in our purposes as a Christian school and we pray that it might be in that way that they follow Jesus... I encourage them to be critical and to ... and I also point at a way to be critical without becoming sceptical; I point them at the way I found answers... We are critical and belief doesn't mean that you have a... you live without doubts and without being critical. Belief does not mean..... it means that you want to be honest but you also know and trust there is a basis under your life and you experience by situations in your life that you could stand on it and that's the strength of belief. Whereas I have to admit, yes, we are also....we are equal human beings as every other ...we have doubts... but we have also a foundation that we experienced in our lives

The issue of how critical young readers at Jacobus Fruytier are cannot be understood without reference to Calvinism. While young readers demonstrated criticality and personal decision-making capabilities (even disagreeing with the views of teachers on particular issues such as the *Lord of the Rings*) in interviews, in the survey they *appear* to exercise less freewill than the students in the English schools. We need to be careful, however, not to apply a 'secular' perspective to the interpretation of survey findings concerning this school. When asked to respond to the statement: 'It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in' only 56% agreed whereas all of the English schools returned a result between 90-100%. The influence of Calvinism here is clear in the relative emphasis given to a believer choosing God or God choosing a believer. When I asked Henk van Sorge about this finding he explained (via Email):

The accent in our background is that although we have a personal responsibility in receiving and acknowledging Jesus as Saviour we also believe that we are not altogether FREE in our choice. Since we emphasise that God has a right on our lives as Creator on his creatures. His promises demand us to give the only right answer of putting our faith to Him and dedicating our lives in obedience to Him and His love. That perspective might have influenced the results. Am I free to do what my opinion and ideas say? No, God has as a Creator and Saviour a claim on my life, His will is decisive for my life.

(10th December 2008 Email communication)

Having obtained such results I interviewed the students surveyed, without any teachers present, to explore this finding and it was evident that students exercised free-will and their views were respected. Another Email response from Henk van Sorge to the notion of classifying schools as 'strong' or 'moderate' is helpful:

I'm not sure Jacobus Fruytier fits the description of either 'moderate' or 'strong' schools – it certainly is not moderate. The Christian message of believing Christ and acknowledging his reign over every aspect of (a personal) life is presented through RE (largely Christian and known as PTE) and assemblies as the only Way for the best life thinkable. In other lessons there is reference to core values of the Bible. Students are mostly conservative Calvinistic. Nevertheless we also thoroughly teach them other worldviews. Considering the normal developments of our teenagers there is a period in their lives that they take their decisions themselves about following in the footsteps of the Christian worldview of their parents / school or accepting other worldviews e.g. the liberal faith. We help them and pray for them to take their own and to take the best decisions. It is striking that their Christian education results very often into becoming very appreciated constructive (Christian) citizens in a mostly liberal society.

The acceptance of the legitimacy of such schooling within Dutch liberal democratic society is well known and there are seven Reformed schools of which Jacobus Fruytier is just one. These schools educate 22,500 students in 22 locations and are all state funded.

Learning for Life in a Liberal Democracy: Conclusions and Recommendations

The main conclusions regarding the schools investigated are set out below and elaborated upon briefly in the pages that follow.

1. Christian-Ethos Schools educate for Good Character and Academic Success

Christian-ethos schools have the theological resources to transform expectations, raise attainment and provide high quality character and moral education. The belief that each student is 'created in God's image', regardless of ability or background, fosters faith in students' potential but ensures their value is not based upon what they can do but who they are.

2. Christian-Ethos Schools provide 'Nurture' and 'Service'

Christian-ethos schools do not easily fit the categories of 'moderate' or 'strong' and the terms 'service' and 'nurture' provide a better fit for purpose. Both types of Christian-ethos school can legitimately receive support from the liberal democratic state.

3. Christian-Ethos Schools promote Critical Reading

Students in Christian-ethos schools demonstrated critical reading of a range of texts and these schools encourage their students to evaluate ethical issues, truth claims and worldviews.

4. Christian-Ethos Schools foster Biblical and Cultural Literacy

High levels of cultural literacy in Christian-ethos schools provide students with the cultural tools needed for participation and full citizenship in their society.

5. Christian-Ethos Schools should establish a Centre for Excellence

A Centre for Excellence in Research and Teaching (CERT) that engages in research, teacher education and publication should be established as a 'beacon of excellence' to disseminate best practice in Christian-ethos schools.

6. Christian-Ethos Schools should be Supported in a Liberal Democratic State

Parents should have the choice of a Christian-ethos school for their children. The state should not seek to impose constraints on schools in terms of admissions and recruitment that undermine the establishment of a Christian ethos that is essential to success.

7. Christian-Ethos Schools should be Privately Sponsored

The liberal democratic state in the UK should support the creation of more privately sponsored, Christian-ethos schools and academies, such as those described in this report, as they can offer an excellent preparation for life, work and citizenship in a liberal democracy.

1. Christian-Ethos Schools educate for Good Character and Academic Success

(Relating to Research Question 1: Aims, Values and Religious Foundations)

Christian-ethos schools possess the theological resources to transform expectations and raise attainment while providing for the character and moral education of young people. The conviction that human beings are, in some sense, 'created in God's image' emerged as a theme of central importance from the interview data collected in the five schools studied (especially among school leaders). When surveyed, 85% of staff at Jacobus Fruytier, 100% of staff at Bradford Christian School and 100% of principals and vice-principals at the Emmanuel Schools Foundation agreed with the statement: 'Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image'.

The theological view that human beings are 'created in God's image' is not to be confused with 'creationism'; it is the emphasis underpinning high expectations of, and aspirations for, students. Such an emphasis ensures that young people's freedom and equality is respected. Rabbi Julian Jacobs observed that 'The Bible's declaration that every human being is made in the image of God remains the most powerful defence of liberty' (Jacobs, *The Times*, 9 July, 1994). Schools with this foundation have a vital role to play in a liberal society which, compared to other types of society, 'attaches greater importance to the sanctity and dignity of human life, to the education of all its people, to equality of opportunity, to the freedom of the individual and the full development of his or her talents, to the elimination of prejudice against individuals and groups' (Koch and Smith, 2004, pp. 115-116).

It should come as no surprise that schools with a Christian foundation are good for a liberal (free) society because the influence of Christianity on such a society is well documented. Schools that have a high regard for children 'created in God's image' will not treat them as grade 'raw material' or mere statistics as they will understand that a child's value cannot be determined by their examination results, IQ or economic usefulness. Students' inherent value and equality derives from *who* they are rather than what they can *do*.

At the same time, for these schools, what students *do* is important: there needs to be accountability for one's actions and character needs to be developed. Trinity Academy's success can be attributed to character education, core values and a realistic assessment of the need for boundaries and order. The belief that children are 'made in God's image' but have that image tarnished, leads to the twin emphases upon a child's potential but also the need for boundaries and good order. This is a remarkably effective combination. It is significant that all the Christian-ethos schools studied demonstrated high levels of calm, courtesy and order. They also focussed on the development of good character and achieved excellent academic results. At Jacobus Fruytier Christian College and Bradford Christian School, the Christian 'doctrine of man' supports the emphasis on Christian nurture for children in partnership with Christian parents by providing them with the best possible schooling. In the schools of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation the emphasis is upon serving local communities regardless of faith by providing schools with a Christian ethos that promote academic and vocational excellence and thereby support regeneration.

2. Christian-Ethos Schools provide 'Nurture' and 'Service'

(Relating to Research Question 1: Aims, Values and Religious Foundations)

Emmanuel College, The King's Academy and Trinity Academy can be seen as 'service' schools as they primarily seek to serve local communities, often in areas of relative socio-economic disadvantage. The mission of the schools is to significantly raise educational standards and to improve the opportunities for young people in these communities. This is a different mission to that of either Jacobus Fruytier College (JF) or Bradford Christian School (BCS) which were both founded by Christian parents, dissatisfied with the prevailing secularism of education, who wanted the Christian 'nurture' at school to be congruent with that provided within the Christian home.

The findings from this research suggest that Christian-ethos schools do not easily fit into the categories of 'Moderate' or 'Strong' (McDonough's, 1998). A 'strong' identity school is defined as one which seeks 'to foster a separate education of extensive scope and duration that is *meant to ensure* that children adhere to a distinct ancestral identity throughout their lives' and a feature of such schools is that 'they seek to restrict membership to individuals from a particular cultural, racial, ethnic, national or linguistic group' and 'seek to advance a separate education affirming and reinforcing the identity of the group in question' (McDonough, 1998, p. 464). Another characteristic of a 'strong' faith school is that it 'denies a division between the sacred and the secular' or the possibility of 'compartmentalizing knowledge' (Burtonwood, 2006, p. 80). Assumptions that 'strong schools' consider they have 'a right to reproduce themselves – that is, to do whatever they think necessary to pass on their way of life to their children' (Walzer, 2003, p. 464) or that they base 'pedagogy on a cultural transmission model' (Burtonwood, 2006, p.80) are not borne out by this research.

At Jacobus Fruytier and Bradford Christian School all teachers are Christian and most children come from Christian homes; in addition the integration of Christian perspectives in curriculum areas is seen to be an integral part of the education provided. In this sense, they fit McDonough's 'strong' category but evidence from these schools indicate they are not 'meant to *ensure*' children graduate as Christians for they have no power to 'ensure' autonomous faith-based decisions in a religious context where human freewill and divine sovereignty is deemed so vital. These schools seek to 'nurture' because they recognise that children and young people must exercise their own freewill in order to autonomously choose faith in Christ. The community 'service' schools of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation display considerable strength of identity, and ethos, but would be termed 'moderate' in McDonough's terms because they provide a 'starting point' from which young people can view their options.

3. Christian-Ethos Schools promote Critical Reading

(Relating to Research Question 2: Texts and Reading)

When 14-year-old students were asked to evaluate the statement 'Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important' 79% of students at schools sponsored by the Emmanuel Schools Foundation agreed as did 100% and 90% respectively at Bradford Christian School and Jacobus Fruytier College. Children and young people in these Christian-ethos schools engaged in a good deal of critical reading of 'religious' truth claims. All the schools considered that critically reading different worldviews was an essential part of schooling. As the Principal of Trinity Academy explained 'we have a Christian ethos which means that faith and belief are important and we encourage students to think for themselves about the big questions of life'.

All schools shared a conviction that it was not enough to be effective and efficient or to focus only on achieving examination results and academic success. For these schools, education is about helping students consider the 'bigger picture'. Subjects such as PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics) and assemblies, that encouraged the reading of worldviews and truth claims, seemed much more significant in these Christian-ethos schools (and more time and energy appeared to be devoted to this) than is usual in secular schools. These Christian-ethos schools helped young people to consider the assumptions of wider society and ways of living that are often taken for granted but much more (rather than less) should be done in all Christian-ethos schools to enable young people to 'read' and interpret the wider culture in which they live and to understand the sources of its values (Pike, 2005) not least as they are expressed in the curriculum.

At Trinity Academy, students perceived a number of possible sources for values and had a range of views (sometimes differing from their Principal) about whether the Core Values were Christian or not. The schools in this study were keen for their students to critically read values in literature and life, society and school. Censorship was not an issue in these schools although Bradford Christian School and Jacobus Fruytier College seemed keener on discussing controversial content with students (to promote critical reading) whereas at The Kings School and Trinity Academy students were more likely to read such texts in school in a library without any discussion surrounding such reading. However, these schools recognized the importance of students being able to read well in order to make up their own minds about the authorial viewpoint and the moral stance of texts. When asked to respond to the statement 'It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in' between 90-100% of students in the English schools agreed. At Jacobus Fruytier a lower figure is attributed to Calvinistic belief that places a greater emphasis upon the sovereignty of God. In interviews and lessons, students in all the schools were encouraged to subject their beliefs, as well as the literary texts they read, to critical scrutiny.

4. Christian-Ethos Schools foster Cultural and Biblical Literacy

(Relating to Research Question 2: Texts and Reading)

Cultural literacy is important because 'literate culture has become the common currency for social and economic exchange in our democracy, and the only available ticket to full citizenship' (Hirsch, 1987, p.22). Students' cultural literacy was enhanced by the high levels of biblical literacy fostered in the Christian ethos schools studied. The leadership of all the schools had a high regard for the Bible, which appeared to be the single most familiar text to students. This contrasts sharply with findings from a recent study that concludes 'the Bible is never read by two-thirds of thirteen to fifteen year olds in secondary school in the UK' (Francis, 2000, p.165). In this respect, Christian ethos schools are a bulwark against the cultural disinheritance of Christianity and are immensely valuable to their culture.

The Bible provides potent cultural symbols that enable us 'to interpret our experience of the world even while the intellectual current apparently flows strongly against the belief systems in which those images were born' (Jasper, 1999, pp.12-13) and therefore a secure knowledge of this cultural and literary text is essential if young people are to access and understand their culture and to communicate effectively within it. The focus upon the Bible in all the schools studied provided a common point of reference for the exploration of a range of moral and ethical issues as well as cultural and literary study.

The works of Shakespeare and the Bible are the two most influential collections of literary works in the English language and yet nationally while active approaches to Shakespeare's works ensure these works are enjoyed and appreciated by children, the Bible is generally neglected (Pike, 2002; 2003a). Ample evidence was found, especially in English, of the benefits of fostering access to the Bible in the schools studied.

Many 'religious and educational organizations support a literary study of the Bible in public schools because it is great literature and because it is foundational for understanding Western culture' (Wachlin, 1997, p. 7) but the Bible is a challenging literary text. How young people, saturated in twenty-first century culture, can become '*keen* readers' (who are both perceptive and *motivated*), is an issue to be addressed by Christian-ethos schools that have a high regard for Scripture.

5. Christian-Ethos Schools should establish a Centre for Excellence

(Relating to Research Question 3: Training Teachers)

Given the success of the English Christian-ethos schools in this study (all have excellent Ofsted reports and the ESF schools are heavily oversubscribed), their potential to be 'beacons of excellence' and to influence practice in other schools should be recognized. There is every reason to recommend that they should provide teacher education more widely. The highly effective approach to school transformation at Trinity Academy, for instance, should be documented and disseminated more widely by the Emmanuel Schools Foundation.

A 'Centre for Excellence in Research and Teaching' (CERT) linked to a highly successful and innovative school such as Trinity Academy could engage in high quality research and teacher education to ensure the dissemination of best practice. A CERT could draw upon the wealth of experience within the Emmanuel Schools Foundation but, like the Foundation itself, would have a values base that is lacking in secular teacher training generally. As the leader of a course that trains over sixty secondary teachers each year at the University of Leeds (and an external examiner for teacher training courses at two other major universities) I am only too aware that the current *Standards* (TDA, 2007) for teacher education do not take into sufficient account the values underpinning activity in the classroom. Organizations such as the Emmanuel Schools Foundation could have a greater impact and support their own growth by establishing a national (and international) profile in research and training. Such a CERT could counteract media criticism and dispel myths about Christian ethos schools in general and those regarding the Emmanuel Schools Foundation in particular.

The Christian Driestar Educatief (where 1,200 student teachers are trained for primary education and 400 are trained for secondary education to teach Dutch, German, English, History, Mathematics and Economics) highlights the absence of a comparable equivalent in the UK and needs to be addressed. Christian-ethos teacher education could draw upon existing initiatives (such as the in-house training at the ESF, the CST, the Stapleford Centre and the Driestar Educatief programme) as appropriate. In CERT's courses, research and publications, the value and legitimacy of a Christian ethos and Christian perspectives across the curriculum could be disseminated.

6. Christian-Ethos Schools should be Supported in a Liberal Democratic State

(Relating to Research Question 4: Faith-based influences upon children and Research Question 5: Policy Implications)

The views of 14-year-olds expressed here and the education they experienced in a range of Christian-ethos schools indicates that these schools should be a state-funded (but not increasingly state-controlled) option for more parents. Very high levels of approval for their schools were recorded among students. When asked to respond to the statement 'I think this school is very good' 82% of fourteen-year-old students at the Emmanuel Schools Foundation, 88% at Bradford Christian School and 91% at Jacobus Fruytier 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'.

Due to oversubscription children whose parents wish them to be educated at schools belonging to the Emmanuel Schools Foundation are denied a place. Even now Bede Academy which opens in September 2009 is oversubscribed. In the light of the success achieved by the Emmanuel Schools Foundation it seems indefensible that LEAs have not supported this organization in opening the academies it is prepared to sponsor which would serve 10,000 children whose parents would wish them to receive such an education.

It is similarly indefensible that many tax-paying parents who wish their children to attend Bradford Christian School are denied this option as they cannot afford the fees required by a school outside the state sector. According to this research, parents and students (Christian and non-Christian alike) are pleased with their Christian-ethos schools. 88% of parents at Bradford Christian School agreed with the statement 'I want the government to financially support Bradford Christian School but not to interfere with it'.

Parents should be given more choice because they are generally better placed to make judgments about a school than the state (Tooley, 1998). Evidently 'allowing parents to choose their children's moral culture is essential to true diversity' and 'a system of school choice' is a viable solution (Glanzer, 2003, p. 303). On the basis of the evidence, Trinity Academy addresses the needs of 'low income families most in need of healthy and vibrant character education options' (Glanzer, 2003, p. 303).

While families in Thorne and Moorends (the area served by Trinity Academy) have benefitted, many other citizens are not so fortunate and 'a public school system concerned about character should allow parents of all economic levels, not just the wealthy, to choose their children's moral culture' and it is clear that removing 'barriers to parental choice' would create an education system that truly 'respects diversity, especially for the poor' (Glanzer, 2003, p.304). The approach at Trinity Academy (of focusing on Core Values that are inspired by the Christian faith but subscribed to by citizens from diverse backgrounds) is a model that demonstrates inclusion. More schools like this should be included within the education system of a liberal democracy.

7. Christian-Ethos Schools should be Privately Sponsored

(Relating to Research Question 5: Policy Implications)

It is important to reflect that it seems to have taken private sponsorship to achieve the transformation witnessed at Trinity Academy. Families in Thorne and Moorends are seeing their community transformed and young people have already had their educational opportunities transformed as a result of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation's investment. The culture created at Trinity through private business sponsorship and Judeo-Christian sources of moral and character education is undoubtedly a good preparation for life and work in a liberal democracy. Sir Peter Vardy sponsored Trinity Academy because he was motivated by his Christian faith to 'give the children a better start in life' but can LEA (Local Education Authority) sponsorship of academies do as well?

Academies run by LEAs miss the point in one important respect: it is *private* organizations that can provide an alternative to publicly controlled education and thereby offer more choice to parents. Too much state influence on education is inimical to personal liberty and once it is accepted that schools can be publicly funded and yet privately led, managed and sponsored, new possibilities emerge. In the light of the Trinity experience providing more Christian-ethos schools like it could prove to be liberating for those learning to live in a liberal democracy. The model proposed by Professor James Tooley of Newcastle University is redolent, in certain respects, of an expanded and developed Academy Programme in the UK:

If we abhor 'sink' schools and want a guarantee of quality for all children, no matter what their parental circumstances, then the solution is competing educational companies with strong brand names providing for them. Such competing chains of schools and colleges are beginning to emerge around the world

(Tooley, 2003, p.445)

The Emmanuel Schools Foundation 'brand' is distinctive with a group of four academies in the North of England, and plans for seven in total, but is not allowed to compete fairly in the educational market. With experience of running the 'Most Improved Academy in England' the Emmanuel Schools Foundation should be encouraged to run more schools in order to see standards of education rise and the regeneration of more communities. Schools like Trinity Academy, with a private sponsor and a Christian ethos, are able to serve liberal society well because they are more likely to provide a coherent moral culture and distinctive ethos than can be achieved by secular, common schools that eschew the sources of values and the narratives in which those values are located. Failing to teach the Judeo-Christian roots of our culture in schools leaves children vulnerable to the promotion of comprehensive liberal values which children are taught to 'believe in' (Pike, 2008). Rather like the abolition of slavery (a Christian-inspired project that was good for everyone) providing more Christian-ethos schools would prove liberating for those learning to live and work in a liberal democracy.

Believing in Christian-Ethos Schools

It is sometimes assumed that schools should be secular because society is increasingly secular. It is even assumed that successful schools which currently have a distinct Christian ethos ought to change and become more secular in order to reflect current society and be more 'relevant'. This sort of thinking can (and must) be challenged not least because it is based on the false assumption that a school's values should reflect 'society's values'. Parents generally want their children to have different values to the celebrities who gain notoriety on 'reality' TV shows or make headlines for the wrong reasons. For schools to reflect such aspects of society would be a serious mistake. Education and schooling are not the media or entertainment industry. Equally, good Christian-ethos schools will have many of the same values as a genuinely liberal society that strives for social justice. Yet the criticisms of Christian organizations running schools, (often made by those who believe schools should be secular and state-controlled) often mean that the benefits of Christian-ethos schooling can be overlooked. How then do schools with a distinct Christian ethos benefit society? Should we have more faith in Christian-ethos schools?

Defending every practice in every school that considers itself to be in some sense 'Christian' would be as foolish as defending every practice in every school that considers itself to be 'secular'. Yet, defending the principle and practice of Christian-ethos schooling in an increasingly secular society is important and necessary. A common feature of the five schools reported in this research is that they all have considerable faith in young people: they have high aspirations for young people and high expectations of them. The leaders of the schools studied possess the theological resources to bring about transformation because they believe children are both 'made in God's image' (and therefore possess creative and rational potential) and also in need of redemption (and therefore perform best when they have clear boundaries). In communities, families and individuals where regeneration is needed and there is a history of underachievement, such beliefs can transform expectations. When Christian-ethos schools educate for academic and vocational excellence by cultivating such virtues as diligence and self-discipline, respect and responsibility, humility and compassion, they serve the common good.

A Christian work ethic that encourages young people to make the most of the talents and opportunities they have been given, certainly provides a better basis for schooling than an entertainment culture that emphasizes the importance of having a good time with little regard for others. Compared to the emptiness of materialism and consumer culture, the spiritual and moral values of many Christian-ethos schools offer a rich preparation for life and work in our society. Compared to the uncritical approach of young people who are rarely challenged to think about moral issues or religious truth claims, an emphasis on personal moral responsibility, derived from the Christian faith, is of considerable benefit to society. For young people brought up in secular homes, in a culture that privatizes religious commitments, a Christian school can offer a distinctly different vantage point and help young people make autonomous decisions about matters of faith.

Dissemination during 2008-2009

The Faith in the Academy conference was held at the University of Leeds on 21st October 2008 in addition to the presentation of the following papers:

'The implications of liberal pluralism for education in culturally diverse societies' Presentation on 22 April 2008 3.00-5.00 at the Lifelong Learning Institute, Seminar Series, University of Leeds (Pike, M.A.)

'Inclusion and the New Christian-Sponsored Academies' University of Leeds, School of Education Research Conference 11 May 2008 (Pike, M.A.)

'Character Education in England's Most Improved Academy' Paper presented at the USA National Character Education Conference (CEP) Washington DC, 18 October 2008 (Pike, M.A.)

'Religious Reading in a Secular Society: Learning for Life in a Liberal Democracy' Paper presented at the Association for Moral Education conference 'Faith, Democracy and Values' at Notre Dame University, USA, November 2008 (Pike, M.A.)

'The Emmanuel Schools Foundation: Leading and Sponsoring Transformation at England's Most Improved Academy', *Management in Education*, Vol 23 (3): 139-144. July 2009 (Pike, M.A.)

'Tolerating strong identity Christian Schools in England and The Netherlands?' 35th Conference of the Association for Moral Education (AME) 'Cultivating Tolerance' 2 - 4 July 2009, Utrecht University, The Netherlands (Pike, M.A.)

'Reading Tolerance in Christian Schools' AME Conference 'Cultivating Tolerance' 2 - 4 July 2009, Utrecht University, The Netherlands (Pike, M.A.)

'Should the liberal state support strong Christian Schools?' BERA (British Educational Research Association) Annual Conference, University of Manchester, 2 - 5 September 2009 (Pike, M.A.)

'Reading the Religious Sources of Core Values and Character Education in England's Most Improved Academy', BERA Annual Conference, University of Manchester, 2 - 5 September 2009 (Pike, M.A.)

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Faith in the Academy?

Reading Core Values, Character Education and Christian Ethos in the Emmanuel Schools Foundation

Tuesday 21 October 2008, 9.30 am – 3.30 pm

Venue: Centenary Gallery, Parkinson Court, University of Leeds

SCHEDULE FOR THE CONFERENCE

9.30 am	Registration and Tea/Coffee
10.00 -10.30	1: Faith in the Academy Dr Mark Pike interviews Sir Peter Vardy on private business sponsorship of schools
10.30 - 11.30	2: Faith in Core Values Reading Core Values in the Arts and Humanities Curriculum Nigel McQuoid (Director of Schools, ESF) Ian Brew (Principal of Trinity Academy) Dr Julie McGonigle (Vice-Principal at Trinity) Dr Mark Pike (School of Education, University of Leeds)
11.30 - 11.40	BREAK
11.40 - 12.40	3: Faith in Young Citizens High Aspirations, High Expectations: Imago Dei & Excellence Jonathan Winch (Principal of Emmanuel College) Dr Mark Pike (School of Education, University of Leeds)
12.40 -1.40 pm	LUNCH
1.40 - 2.10	4: Faith in the Future Bede Academy (for ages 3 to 18) opens in September 2009 Gwyneth Evans (Secondary Principal of Bede Academy) Nigel McQuoid (Executive Principal of Bede Academy)
2.10 - 3.00	5: Faith in the Emmanuel Schools Foundation 'Question Time'- panel - Opportunity for those attending, to ask the speakers questions
3.30 pm	Close of conference

Conference Delegate List

Faith in the Academy?

*Reading Core Values and Christian Ethics
in the Emmanuel Schools Foundation*

Tuesday 21 October 2008 9.30-3.30 pm

**Venue: Centenary Gallery, Parkinson Court,
University of Leeds**

Name

Miss Evangelia Alexiou
Mrs Sylvia Baker
Mr Ian Brew
Mrs Hazel Britton
Mr Richard Britton
Ms Sue Brown
Ms Sarah Bye
Mr Adam Carver
Mr Graham Coyle
Mr Chris Drew
Mr John Ellwood
Ms Gwyneth Evans
Mr Nigel Fawcett-Jones
Mr David Freeman
Miss Beth Green
Mr Andrew Gunn
Mr Mark Hall
Mr Mark Hamill
Dr Charlotte Hardman
M Tom Harrison
Miss Julie Harrop
Mr Michael Jennings
Mr Arthur Jones
Miss Hye Won Kim
Mr David Lewis
Miss Barbara Lord
Dr Jackie Lukes
Dr Julie McGonigle
Mr Nigel McQuoid
Mr David Charles Lundie
Mr Phill Moon
Mr Tom Moon
Mr David Morton
Professor Shiho Nozaki
Professor Audrey Osler
Dr Mark Pike

Institution

School of Education, University of Leeds
University of Warwick
Trinity Academy
Christian Schools' Trust, Tadley
Christian Schools' Trust, Tadley
Scripture Union

Christian Life Church
Christian Schools Trust, Worcester
The King's Academy
The King's School Senior - Witney
Bede Academy
Bradford Christian School
The King's School Senior - Witney
Green College
School of Education, University of Leeds
Emmanuel College
Liverpool Hope University
Durham University
Learning for Life
Doncaster Schools Work Trust
School of Education, University of Leeds
West Yorkshire School of Christian Studies
School of Education, University of Leeds
Head of Sheffield Springs Academy
Christian Fellowship School
University of Hull
Trinity Academy
Emmanuel Schools Foundation
University of Glasgow
Bradford Christian School
Trinity and All Saints College
The Stapleford Centre
Konen Women's University, Kobe, Japan
School of Education, University of Leeds
School of Education, University of Leeds

Mr Mark Roques
Mr David Seaton
Ms Katy Sharples
Mr Andrew Taylor
Mrs Sharon Taylor
Miss Janette Thompson
Mrs Penny Thompson
Mr Andrew Townsend
Mr Henk (H.A.) van Zetten
Mr David Vardy
Sir Peter Vardy
Professor Geoffrey Walford
Mr Henk (H.) Westerink
Mr Jonathan Winch
Dr Glenys Woods
Professor Phillip Woods
Dr David Yeomans

West Yorkshire School of Christian Studies
Excell3 Ltd Birmingham
Christian Fellowship School
Eversheds Solicitors
Leeds Faith in Schools
Emmanuel College
Liverpool Hope University

Jacobus Fruytier College
Vardy Group
Emmanuel Schools Foundation
University of Oxford
Jacobus Fruytier College
Emmanuel College
University of Gloucestershire
University of Gloucestershire
School of Education, University of Leeds

Survey Results

Students

Question	All ESF <i>n</i> =543	Trinity Academy <i>n</i> =191	The Kings Academy <i>n</i> =170
Religion	33% Christian	30% Christian	35% Christian
I think this school is very good	64% Agree 18% Strongly agree 82% Overall	64% Agree 21% Strongly agree 85% Overall	59% Agree 15% Strongly agree 74% Overall
Teachers want us to do our best ... work our best in class, don't mess about and we'll get somewhere	55% Agree 40% Strongly agree 95% Overall	51% Agree 47% Strongly agree 97% Overall	55% Agree 39% Strongly agree 95% Overall
Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views	57% Agree 39% Strongly agree 96% Overall	60% Agree 37% Strongly agree 96% Overall	57% Agree 40% Strongly agree 98% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's (core) values are still very good values to follow	57% Agree 16% Strongly agree 73% Overall	55% Agree 20% Strongly agree 75% Overall	54% Agree 14% Strongly agree 68% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my English/ literature lessons:	20% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 27% Overall	13% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 14% Overall	15% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 16% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons:	29% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 35% Overall	24% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 31% Overall	32% Sometimes 5% Quite/very often 37% Overall
It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in	29% Agree 66% Strongly Agree 95% Overall	37% Agree 54% Strongly Agree 91% Overall	25% Agree 72% Strongly Agree 97% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	49% Agree 30% Strongly Agree 79% Overall	47% Agree 27% Strongly Agree 74% Overall	50% Agree 33% Strongly Agree 83% Overall
When I read fiction I make moral judgments, I think about whether characters are doing right or wrong	44% Agree 7% Strongly Agree 51% Overall	45% Agree 11% Strongly Agree 56% Overall	42% Agree 7% Strongly Agree 49% Overall
In order to receive God's forgiveness I have to accept that Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross was Him paying the penalty for my sin so that I can be forgiven	34% Agree 19% Strongly Agree 53% Overall	28% Agree 16% Strongly Agree 44% Overall	37% Agree 17% Strongly Agree 54% Overall

The statements on questionnaires were generally drawn from participants' statements, usually during interviews, and their own words are used wherever possible.

Students

Question	Emmanuel College <i>n</i> =182	Bradford Christian <i>n</i> =16	Jacobus Fruytier <i>n</i> =32
Religion	36% Christian	88% Christian	100% Christian
I think this school is very good	67% Agree 17% Strongly agree 83% Overall	38% Agree 50% Strongly agree 88% Overall	91% Agree 0% Strongly agree 91% Overall
Teachers want us to do our best ... work our best in class, don't mess about and we'll get somewhere	58% Agree 35% Strongly agree 93% Overall	44% Agree 56% Strongly agree 100% Overall	44% Agree 56% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views	55% Agree 39% Strongly agree 94% Overall	44% Agree 56% Strongly agree 100% Overall	56% Agree 41% Strongly agree 97% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's (core) values are still very good values to follow	66% Agree 13% Strongly agree 79% Overall	56% Agree 44% Strongly agree 100% Overall	74% Agree 10% Strongly agree 84% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my English/ literature lessons:	31% Sometimes 20% Quite/very often 51% Overall	60% Sometimes 15% Quite/very often 75% Overall	81% Sometimes 13% Quite/very often 94% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons:	30% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 37% Overall	63% Sometimes 25% Quite/very often 88% Overall	84% Sometimes 13% Quite/very often 87% Overall
It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in	24% Agree 72% Strongly Agree 96% Overall	63% Agree 38% Strongly Agree 100% Overall	53% Agree 3% Strongly Agree 56% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	51% Agree 28% Strongly Agree 79% Overall	86% Agree 14% Strongly Agree 100% Overall	81% Agree 9% Strongly Agree 90% Overall
When I read fiction I make moral judgments, I think about whether characters are doing right or wrong	44% Agree 2% Strongly Agree 46% Overall	67% Agree 13% Strongly Agree 80% Overall	66% Agree 6% Strongly Agree 72% Overall
In order to receive God's forgiveness I have to accept that Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross was Him paying the penalty for my sin so that I can be forgiven	37% Agree 24% Strongly Agree 61% Overall	25% Agree 69% Strongly Agree 94% Overall	41% Agree 53% Strongly Agree 94% Overall

Staff

Question	All ESF <i>n</i> =311	Trinity Academy <i>n</i> =101	Kings Academy <i>n</i> =128	Emmanuel Academy <i>n</i> =82	Bradford Christian <i>n</i> =16	Jacobus Fruytier <i>n</i> =19
In order to receive God's forgiveness I have to accept that Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross was Him paying the penalty for my sin so that I can be forgiven	23% Agree 29% Strongly Agree 52% Overall	11% Agree 18% Strongly Agree 29% Overall	28% Agree 20% Strongly Agree 48% Overall	27% Agree 57% Strongly Agree 84% Overall	6% Agree 94% Strongly Agree 100% Overall	37% Agree 58% Strongly 95% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	31% Agree 27% Strongly agree 58% Overall	25% Agree 15% Strongly agree 40% Overall	33% Agree 18% Strongly agree 51% Overall	34% Agree 54% Strongly agree 88% Overall	13% Agree 87% Strongly Agree 100% Overall	32% Agree 53% Strongly Agree 85% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views	37% Agree 61% Strongly agree 98% Overall	30% Agree 69% Strongly agree 99% Overall	41% Agree 57% Strongly agree 98% Overall	41% Agree 57% Strongly agree 99% Overall	57% Agree 43% Strongly Agree 100% Overall	67% Agree 17% Strongly Agree 84% Overall

Trinity Academy Year 9 Students

Question	All ESF (Year 9) n=543	Trinity Academy n=191
Religion	33% Christian 56% No Religion	30% Christian 64% No Religion
I think this school is very good	64% Agree 18% Strongly agree 82% Overall	64% Agree 21% Strongly agree 85% Overall
I feel safe in this school, it feels good here	61% Agree 22% Strongly agree 83% Overall	66% Agree 21% Strongly agree 87% Overall
Teachers want us to do our best ... work your best in class, don't mess about and you'll get somewhere	55% Agree 40% Strongly agree 95% Overall	51% Agree 47% Strongly agree 97% Overall
Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views	57% Agree 39% Strongly agree 96% Overall	60% Agree 37% Strongly agree 96% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's Core Values are still very good values to follow	57% Agree 16% Strongly agree 73% Overall	55% Agree 20% Strongly agree 75% Overall
The school's Core Values are not just Christian values	57% Agree 14% Strongly agree 72% Overall	58% Agree 18% Strongly agree 77% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	49% Agree 30% Strongly agree 79% Overall	47% Agree 27% Strongly agree 74% Overall
It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in	29% Agree 66% Strongly agree 94% Overall	37% Agree 54% Strongly agree 91% Overall
I like to know what my teachers believe	48% Agree 19% Strongly agree 67% Overall	48% Agree 24% Strongly agree 72% Overall
Core Values come into my English lessons:	24% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 30% Overall	28% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 35% Overall
Core Values come into my PTE lessons:	23% Sometimes 62% Quite/very often 85% Overall	25% Sometimes 65% Quite/very often 90% Overall
Core Values come into my History lessons:	16% Sometimes 4% Quite/very often 20% Overall	20% Sometimes 5% Quite/very often 26% Overall
Core Values come into my Geography lessons	7% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 7% Overall	12% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 12% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my English lessons:	20% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 27% Overall	13% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 14% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons:	29% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 35% Overall	24% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 31% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my Geography lessons:	6% Sometimes 0% Quite/very often 6% Overall	6% Sometimes 0% Quite/very often 6% Overall

Trinity Academy Staff

Question	All ESF <i>n</i> =311	Trinity Academy <i>n</i> =101
Here whole school values are explicit and the kids know what they are	67% Agree 25% Strongly agree 92% Overall	75% Agree 20% Strongly agree 95% Overall
The Core Values of this school are easy to buy into	68% Agree 20% Strongly agree 89% Overall	70% Agree 18% Strongly agree 88% Overall
The Core Values are not just Christian values	54% Agree 37% Strongly agree 91% Overall	49% Agree 41% Strongly agree 90% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's Core Values are still very good values to follow.	44% Agree 55% Strongly agree 99% Overall	43% Agree 56% Strongly agree 99% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what you believe or don't believe to be true are important	58% Agree 31% Strongly agree 89% Overall	69% Agree 23% Strongly agree 92% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is uniquely gifted	48% Agree 41% Strongly agree 88% Overall	48% Agree 35% Strongly agree 83% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	31% Agree 27% Strongly agree 58% Overall	25% Agree 15% Strongly agree 40% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views.	37% Agree 61% Strongly agree 98% Overall	30% Agree 69% Strongly agree 99% Overall

Trinity Academy Principal and Vice Principals

Question	All ESF <i>n</i> =11	Trinity Academy <i>n</i> =5
The Core Values are found perfectly in Jesus Christ	10% Agree 90% Strongly agree 100% Overall	20% Agree 80% Strongly agree 100% Overall
The Core Values are not just Christian values	18% Agree 64% Strongly agree 82% Overall	0% Agree 80% Strongly agree 80% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views	27% Agree 73% Strongly agree 100% Overall	27% Agree 73% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	9% Agree 91% Strongly agree 100% Overall	20% Agree 80% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	9% Agree 91% Strongly agree 100% Overall	20% Agree 80% Strongly agree 100% Overall

The King's Academy Year 9 Students

Question	All ESF <i>n</i> =543	The Kings Academy <i>n</i> =170
Religion	33% Christian 56% No Religion	35% Christian 51% No Religion
I think this school is very good	64% Agree 18% Strongly agree 82% Overall	59% Agree 15% Strongly agree 74% Overall
I feel safe in this school, it feels good here	61% Agree 22% Strongly agree 83% Overall	59% Agree 15% Strongly agree 75% Overall
Teachers want us to do our best ... work your best in class, don't mess about and you'll get somewhere	55% Agree 40% Strongly agree 95% Overall	55% Agree 39% Strongly agree 95% Overall
Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views	57% Agree 39% Strongly agree 96% Overall	57% Agree 40% Strongly agree 98% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's Core Values are still very good values to follow	57% Agree 16% Strongly agree 73% Overall	54% Agree 14% Strongly agree 68% Overall
The school's Core Values are not just Christian values	57% Agree 14% Strongly agree 72% Overall	55% Agree 13% Strongly agree 68% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	49% Agree 30% Strongly agree 79% Overall	50% Agree 33% Strongly agree 83% Overall
It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in	29% Agree 66% Strongly agree 94% Overall	25% Agree 72% Strongly agree 97% Overall
I like to know what my teachers believe	48% Agree 19% Strongly agree 67% Overall	46% Agree 22% Strongly agree 68% Overall
Core Values come into my English lessons:	24% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 30% Overall	19% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 20% Overall
Core Values come into my PTE lessons:	23% Sometimes 62% Quite/very often 85% Overall	27% Sometimes 59% Quite/very often 87% Overall
Core Values come into my History lessons:	16% Sometimes 4% Quite/very often 20% Overall	13% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 14% Overall
Core Values come into my Geography lessons	7% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 7% Overall	5% Sometimes 0% Quite/very often 5% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my English lessons:	20% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 27% Overall	15% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 16% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons:	29% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 35% Overall	32% Sometimes 5% Quite/very often 37% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my Geography lessons:	6% Sometimes 0% Quite/very often 6% Overall	32% Sometimes 5% Quite/very often 37% Overall

The King's Academy Staff

Question	All ESF n=311	The Kings Academy n=128
Here whole school values are explicit and the kids know what they are	67% Agree 25% Strongly agree 92% Overall	70% Agree 16% Strongly agree 86% Overall
The Core Values of this school are easy to buy into	68% Agree 20% Strongly agree 89% Overall	70% Agree 17% Strongly agree 87% Overall
The Core Values are not just Christian values	54% Agree 37% Strongly agree 91% Overall	55% Agree 44% Strongly agree 99% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's Core Values are still very good values to follow.	44% Agree 55% Strongly agree 99% Overall	55% Agree 44% Strongly agree 99% Overall
Linking those (Core) Values...to the Christian faith, there is absolutely no harm in it whatsoever	59% Agree 24% Strongly agree 83% Overall	63% Agree 18% Strongly agree 81% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what you believe or don't believe to be true are important	58% Agree 31% Strongly agree 89% Overall	64% Agree 24% Strongly agree 88% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is uniquely gifted	48% Agree 41% Strongly agree 88% Overall	56% Agree 30% Strongly agree 86% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	31% Agree 27% Strongly agree 58% Overall	33% Agree 18% Strongly agree 51% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views.	37% Agree 61% Strongly agree 98% Overall	41% Agree 57% Strongly agree 98% Overall

The King's Academy Principal and Vice Principals

Question	All ESF n=11	The Kings Academy n=3
The Core Values are found perfectly in Jesus Christ	10% Agree 90% Strongly agree 100% Overall	0% Agree 100% Strongly agree 100% Overall
The Core Values are not just Christian values	18% Agree 64% Strongly agree 82% Overall	33% Agree 33% Strongly agree 67% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views	27% Agree 73% Strongly agree 100% Overall	33% Agree 67% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	9% Agree 91% Strongly agree 100% Overall	0% Agree 100% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	9% Agree 91% Strongly agree 100% Overall	0% Agree 100% Strongly agree 100% Overall

Emmanuel College Year 9 Students

Question	All ESF <i>n</i> =543	Emmanuel College <i>n</i> =182
Religion	33% Christian 56% No Religion	36% Christian 51% No Religion
I think this school is very good	64% Agree 18% Strongly agree 82% Overall	67% Agree 17% Strongly agree 83% Overall
I feel safe in this school, it feels good here	61% Agree 22% Strongly agree 83% Overall	57% Agree 30% Strongly agree 87% Overall
Teachers want us to do our best ... work your best in class, don't mess about and you'll get somewhere	55% Agree 40% Strongly agree 95% Overall	58% Agree 35% Strongly agree 93% Overall
Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views	57% Agree 39% Strongly agree 96% Overall	55% Agree 39% Strongly agree 94% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's Core Values are still very good values to follow	57% Agree 16% Strongly agree 73% Overall	66% Agree 13% Strongly agree 79% Overall
The school's Core Values are not just Christian values	57% Agree 14% Strongly agree 72% Overall	59% Agree 12% Strongly agree 70% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	49% Agree 30% Strongly agree 79% Overall	51% Agree 28% Strongly agree 79% Overall
It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in	29% Agree 66% Strongly agree 94% Overall	24% Agree 72% Strongly agree 96% Overall
I like to know what my teachers believe	48% Agree 19% Strongly agree 67% Overall	49% Agree 12% Strongly agree 61% Overall
Core Values come into my English lessons:	24% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 30% Overall	24% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 31% Overall
Core Values come into my PTE lessons:	23% Sometimes 62% Quite/very often 85% Overall	16% Sometimes 61% Quite/very often 77% Overall
Core Values come into my History lessons:	16% Sometimes 4% Quite/very often 20% Overall	15% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 21% Overall
Core Values come into my Geography lessons	7% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 7% Overall	4% Sometimes 2% Quite/very often 6% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my English lessons:	20% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 27% Overall	31% Sometimes 20% Quite/very often 51% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons:	29% Sometimes 6% Quite/very often 35% Overall	30% Sometimes 7% Quite/very often 37% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my Geography lessons:	6% Sometimes 0% Quite/very often 6% Overall	7% Sometimes 1% Quite/very often 8% Overall

Emmanuel College Staff

Question	All ESF n=311	Emmanuel College n=82
Here whole school values are explicit and the kids know what they are	67% Agree 25% Strongly agree 92% Overall	55% Agree 44% Strongly agree 99% Overall
The Core Values of this school are easy to buy into	68% Agree 20% Strongly agree 89% Overall	64% Agree 29% Strongly agree 93% Overall
The Core Values are not just Christian values	54% Agree 37% Strongly agree 91% Overall	53% Agree 43% Strongly agree 96% Overall
Whether you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's Core Values are still very good values to follow.	44% Agree 55% Strongly agree 99% Overall	26% Agree 72% Strongly agree 98% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what you believe or don't believe to be true are important	58% Agree 31% Strongly agree 89% Overall	44% Agree 51% Strongly agree 95% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is uniquely gifted	48% Agree 41% Strongly agree 88% Overall	35% Agree 63% Strongly agree 99% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	31% Agree 27% Strongly agree 58% Overall	34% Agree 54% Strongly agree 88% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views.	37% Agree 61% Strongly agree 98% Overall	41% Agree 57% Strongly agree 99% Overall

Emmanuel College Principal and Vice Principals

Question	All ESF n=11	Emmanuel College n=3
The Core Values are found perfectly in Jesus Christ	10% Agree 90% Strongly agree 100% Overall	67% Agree 33% Strongly agree 100% Overall
The Core Values are not just Christian values	18% Agree 64% Strongly agree 82% Overall	33% Agree 67% Strongly agree 100% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views	27% Agree 73% Strongly agree 100% Overall	67% Agree 33% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	9% Agree 91% Strongly agree 100% Overall	0% Agree 100% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important	9% Agree 91% Strongly agree 100% Overall	0% Agree 100% Strongly agree 100% Overall

Bradford Christian School Year 9 Students

Question	Bradford Christian School n=16
Religion	88% Christian 6% No Religion
I think this school is very good	38% Agree 50% Strongly agree 88% Overall
Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views	44% Agree 56% Strongly agree 100% Overall
I am pleased this school provides me with an education that affirms and reinforces my Christian identity	40% Agree 40% Strongly agree 80% Overall
I am from a Christian home	29% Agree 50% Strongly agree 79% Overall
This school encourages me to have Christian beliefs and commitments	56% Agree 31% Strongly agree 87% Overall
I make my own mind up about religious beliefs	67% Agree 27% Strongly agree 94% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my English/ literature lessons:	60% Sometimes 15% Quite/very often 75% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons:	63% Sometimes 25% Quite/very often 88% Overall
This school gives me the education that I need to make my own decisions about Christianity	56% Agree 25% Strongly Agree 81% Overall
It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in	63% Agree 38% Strongly Agree 100% Overall
When I read fiction I make moral judgments, I think about whether characters are doing right or wrong	67% Agree 13% Strongly Agree 80% Overall
In order to receive God's forgiveness I have to accept that Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross was Him paying the penalty for my sin so that I can be forgiven	25% Agree 69% Strongly Agree 94% Overall
I like to know what my teachers believe	50% Agree 31% Strongly Agree 81% Overall

Bradford Christian School Staff

Question	Bradford Christian School n=16
We want children to respect other people, other people's views	57% Agree 43% Strongly Agree 100% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	13% Agree 87% Strongly agree 100% Overall
Matters of faith are important, matters of what you believe or don't believe to be true are important	33% Agree 67% Strongly agree 100% Overall
In order to receive God's forgiveness I have to accept that Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross was Him paying the penalty for my sin so that I can be forgiven	6% Agree 94% Strongly agree 100% Overall
A Christian worldview does have something to say about the teaching of English, Maths and Science	33% Agree 67% Strongly agree 100% Overall
A Christian worldview should inform student's learning in the arts and humanities	33% Agree 67% Strongly agree 100% Overall
We want our Christian children to bring their Christian worldview into the classroom	39% Agree 8% Strongly agree 47% Overall
A Christian worldview and the Bible should more explicitly inform the lessons I teach	46% Agree 8% Strongly agree 54% Overall
The education we provide is meant to encourage children to have Christian beliefs and commitments	56% Agree 44% Strongly agree 100% Overall
We seek to help parents to pass on their Christian faith and way of life to their children	44% Agree 44% Strongly agree 88% Overall
This school provides a separate education that affirms and reinforces student's Christian identity	47% Agree 27% Strongly agree 74% Overall

Bradford Christian School Students

Question	Bradford Christian School Upper Years 9-10 <i>n</i> =35
a. I am pleased that my school has a strong Christian identity	43% Agree 54% Strongly Agree 97% Overall
b. I am free to make my own decisions about Christianity at this school	43% Agree 46% Strongly Agree 89% Overall
c. I am encouraged to think for myself about matters of faith at this school	54% Agree 29% Strongly Agree 83% Overall
d. This school encourages me to treat other people with respect even if I disagree with them	37% Agree 54% Strongly Agree 91% Overall
e. This school prepares me well for life	46% Agree 31% Strongly Agree 77% Overall
f. Christianity or the Bible comes into my lessons	29% Sometimes 71% Quite/ Very often 100% Overall
g. I think Christianity or the Bible should come into my lessons	31% Sometimes 57% Quite/ Very often 88% Overall
h. Christianity or the Bible comes into my English lessons	60% Sometimes 14% Quite/ Very often 74% Overall
i. Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons	48% Sometimes 20% Quite/ Very often 68% Overall
Sex	40% Male 60% Female
Ethnic group	3% Asian 3% Chinese 6% Mixed 89% White
Religion	89% Christian 8% None 3% Other

Bradford Christian School Parents

Question	Bradford Christian School Parents <i>n</i> =81	
a. I am pleased that Bradford Christian School has a strong Christian identity	22% Agree 75% Strongly Agree 97% Overall	
b. I am pleased that my child is/children are nurtured in the Christian faith at this school	20% Agree 76% Strongly Agree 96% Overall	
c. At this school children are free to make their own decisions about the Christian faith:	42% Agree 49% Strongly Agree 91% Overall	
d. I send my child/children to this school primarily because of its Christian identity and character	33% Agree 58% Strongly Agree 91% Overall	
e. I support the core values of this school	24% Agree 71% Strongly Agree 95% Overall	
f. I want my child's/children's schooling to reflect the values of a good Christian home	25% Agree 69% Strongly Agree 94% Overall	
g. I want the government to financially support Bradford Christian School but not to interfere with it	24% Agree 66% Strongly Agree 90% Overall	
h. I want Christianity to come into the curriculum (the range of subjects studied) at this school	38% Agree 56% Strongly Agree 94% Overall	
i. This school encourages my child/children to think for themselves about matters of faith	33% Agree 54% Strongly Agree 87% Overall	
j. At this school my child is/children are prepared well for life	35% Agree 55% Strongly Agree 90% Overall	
k. At this school children are taught to be tolerant and respectful of others, including non-Christians	22% Agree 73% Strongly Agree 95% Overall	
Sex	42% Male 58% Female	
What year(s) do you have children in child	8% Year 1 15% Year 7 5% Year 2 13% Year 8 7% Year 3 10% Year 9 5% Year 4 7% Year 10 6% Year 5 8% Year 11 15% Year 6	
Ethnic group	1% Asian Indian 4% Chinese 4% Mixed 88% White British 3% White Other	
Religion	4% None 94% Christian 3% Agnostic	

Jacobus Fruytier Bilingual 14-Year-Old Students

Question	Jacobus Fruytier <i>n</i> =32
Religion	100% Christian 0% No Religion
I think this school is very good	91% Agree 0% Strongly agree 91% Overall
This school tries to teach me valuable lessons about how to live my life	78% Agree 3% Strongly agree 82% Overall
Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views	56% Agree 41% Strongly agree 97% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my English/ literature lessons:	81% Sometimes 13% Quite/very often 94% Overall
Christianity or the Bible comes into my History lessons:	84% Sometimes 13% Quite/very often 97% Overall
It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in	53% Agree 3% Strongly Agree 56% Overall
When I read fiction I make moral judgments, I think about whether characters are doing right or wrong	66% Agree 6% Strongly Agree 72% Overall
In order to receive God's forgiveness I have to accept that Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross was Him paying the penalty for my sin so that I can be forgiven	41% Agree 53% Strongly Agree 94% Overall

Jacobus Fruytier Staff

Question	Jacobus Fruytier n=19
The religious beliefs that our students come to is very much a personal response and we must honour that	42% Agree 11% Strongly agree 53% Overall
We want children to respect other people, other people's views	67% Agree 17% Strongly Agree 84% Overall
Every individual amongst our student body is created in God's image	32% Agree 53% Strongly Agree 85% Overall
In order to receive God's forgiveness I have to accept that Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross was Him paying the penalty for my sin so that I can be forgiven	37% Agree 58% Strongly 95% Overall
A Christian worldview does have something to say about the teaching of English, Maths and Science	41% Agree 35% Strongly agree 76% Overall
A Christian worldview should inform student's learning in the arts and humanities	47% Agree 47% Strongly agree 94% Overall
We want our Christian teachers to bring their Christian worldview into the classroom	53% Agree 47% Strongly agree 100% Overall
A Christian worldview and the Bible explicitly inform the lessons I teach	53% Agree 41% Strongly agree 94% Overall
A Christian worldview and the Bible explicitly inform lessons across the curriculum	76% Agree 12% Strongly agree 88% Overall
The education we provide is meant to encourage children to have Christian beliefs and commitments	47% Agree 53% Strongly agree 100% Overall
We seek to help parents to pass on their Christian faith and way of life to their children	71% Agree 12% Strongly agree 83% Overall

Percentages may not be equal to 100%, owing to rounding.



Dr Mark Pike, Principal Investigator

Dr Pike is currently a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Leeds where his research focuses on teaching, learning, curriculum and policy, especially with regard to young people's spiritual and moral development, reading and values. Dr Pike publishes and speaks widely on these areas of education and supervises postgraduate students on MA, Ed.D and Ph.D programmes in these fields; he also leads the PGCE Secondary English course for sixty student teachers each year. Before winning an ESRC Studentship to study for his Ph.D at Southampton University, Dr Pike taught in schools for over ten years, finally as Head of the Faculty of English, Communications and Drama in a Hampshire comprehensive school.



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