

Department for Education and Skills

## **Best Practice Research Scholarship**

**Identifying and utilising values: spiritual, moral, social  
and cultural development and citizenship in a primary  
school.**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Relevance of Research**

Values are an important component of current education policy. The National Curriculum promotes shared values as a means of providing a context for effective educational provision, whilst promoting spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and citizenship. Schools are encouraged to reflect on the values of their communities and consider how values can be applied to school ethos and teaching. There is the need for an increased understanding of this area of educational enquiry, particularly finding ways to talk explicitly about values and defining the language used so that school communities can work together in the context of a changing society and their own diverse communities to support the development of children's values.

### **Aims of research**

The aims of this research project were:

1. To determine if it is possible to identify a shared set of core spiritual and moral values held by a school community.
2. To consider if, and how, those values might enable SMSC development and Citizenship education in the curriculum.

The intention was to find ways for a school community to engage in activities that would promote both thinking and talking about values so that it could determine which values were important in its practice. If a degree of consensus between the different parties could be demonstrated, then it could be possible to determine a shared set of core values for the school community. In addition, a further intention was to discover if those values could be used to facilitate spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and citizenship education.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the decade between the introduction of the Education Reform Act in 1988 and the National Curriculum in 1999, there has been considerable debate about the role that schools have in the social and moral development of young people. In fact, as Talbot says, “Values is a good candidate for the title buzzword of the 1990’s.” (2000 p.14) The ERA required schools to provide a ‘broad and balanced curriculum that catered for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and of society’ so that young people were prepared for ‘the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.’ However the emphasis was instrumental – a means to getting qualifications and jobs. It was the public outrage that followed some horrific events

involving children and young people, and the death of a headmaster at the hands of one of his pupils, that led to talk of 'moral panic' and a 'crisis of values' in society. Halstead and Taylor describe that crucial period as one in which there were,

*“Growing uncertainties and unease about public and individual values, attitudes and behaviour. These focus on concerns about the personal and social education of the young and the respective roles of and responsibilities of school, home and other influences in a liberal pluralist democracy.” (2000 p.4)*

Public opinion seemed to support the view that many children and young people had little sense of right and wrong, and that schools should do something about it.

### **Definition of terms**

Values are the frameworks of our lives; they influence how we think and behave, and they also reflect our religious and moral beliefs. Halstead and Taylor define values as,

*“Principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, enduring beliefs about what is worthwhile, ideals for which one strives, standards by*

*which particular beliefs and actions are judged to be good or desirable.” (2000 p.3)*

Talbot writes,

*“Values are qualities that are in themselves worthy of esteem and that, in virtue of this generate*

*a) principles (rules) that guide us in our actions and thoughts;*

*b) standards (ideals) against which we judge things.”*

(2000 p.15)

Alexander describes values as being like “a reference point for thought and action, a powerful aid to decision making.” (2001p.46) Given the seismic changes that have taken place in society and the religious and cultural diversity of the communities of which children and schools are now part, the idea that it is possible to educate children in a values vacuum is no longer tenable.

The discussion document *Spiritual and Moral Development* explicitly stated that schools should promote,

*“Telling the truth; keeping promises; respecting the rights and properties of others; acting considerately towards others; helping those less fortunate and weaker than ourselves; taking personal responsibility for one’s actions; self-discipline and that young people should develop for themselves a set of socially acceptable values and principles.” (NCC 1993, SCAA 1995)*

The strength of this document was its emphasis on the personal development of young people, ensuring they were introduced to a values framework in which they learnt right from wrong and behavioural expectations in the form of rules and the consequences of breaking them. It also emphasised the importance of school ethos to promote the shared values of the community and thereby influence for good the atmosphere and relationships in the school, resulting in classroom behaviour that promoted a positive working environment and a respect for others. It challenged schools to consider how spiritual and moral development could be relevant 'to all aspects of school life' and every area of the curriculum'. Its weakness, however, was its assumption that a reasonable degree of consensus existed about what core values should be promoted. Whilst the document promoted a moral code that it hoped would be widely acceptable to society, it took for granted a neutral standpoint and failed to acknowledge the influence of specific religious beliefs on codes and conventions. Above all the document opened up debate around a number of issues: whether there are absolute values or whether values are relative and more a matter of personal preference: whether in a liberal pluralistic society it is possible to reach a consensus about values and whether there are commonly held values. Halstead and Taylor concluded,

*“The growing diversity of values in society at large, combined with increasing demands for public accountability, has forced schools to articulate their underlying values more explicitly and to reflect on the way that the life of the school may contribute to the development of pupil’s values and attitudes.” (2000 p.17)*

The real catalyst for a discussion of the values promoted in schools was the decision by the government in 1992 that OFSTED should report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The current guidelines require pupils to be judged on their attitudes, values and personal development.

*“Inspectors must evaluate and report on pupil’s attitudes to school, behaviour, personal development and relationships and attendance. In particular they should consider the extent to which pupils:*

- are keen and eager to come to school;*
- show interest in school life, and are involved in the range of activities the school provides;*
- behave well in lessons and around the school, are courteous, trustworthy and show respect for property;*
- work in an atmosphere free from oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, sexism and racism;*
- reflect on what they do and understand its impact on others;*
- respect people’s differences, particularly their feelings, values and beliefs;*
- show initiative and are willing to take responsibility;*
- have high levels of attendance and low levels of unauthorised absence;” (OFSTED 2000 p.22)*

It is interesting to note that OFSTED draws attention to the behaviour of pupil's because 'good behaviour is a pre-requisite for effective learning' and it also states that one can learn about the ethos of the school 'by observing the quality of relationships between pupils of different backgrounds and between pupils and staff.' The National Curriculum states, "All subjects provide opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development." However "a significant contribution is also made by school ethos (and) effective relationships throughout the school." (NC p.19) These two aspects have been shown to be among some of the indicators of successful schools.

### **Successful schools and their values**

Research by Sammons has shown that indicators of a successful school include 'the establishment of a shared set of values', 'a strong ethos which supports good relationships with clear, safe and secure boundaries' and 'a learning community where both teachers and pupils work to ensure healthy relationships', a community in which there is,

- *"A space for everyone to listen and be listened to,*
- *A time and a place for reviewing and reflecting on what has been learned,*
- *A shared and developing language for describing one's own and others' emotions,*
- *A feeling of community and responsibility."* (1995 p.160)
-

More importantly it is now clear that in such an environment more learning takes place. Weissberg and Greenberg (1997) have commented on the importance of self-confidence and a feeling of well being in the learning process, reporting improved SATS scores when children have taken part in emotional education. McCarthy (2000) states that the government's own targets for raising educational achievement are more likely to be reached where opportunities exist to nurture children's self-esteem and space given for talking about their feelings and relationships through such initiatives as 'Quality Circle Time'. However, even more important than having a list of shared values is the need for a school community to ensure that they hold onto their values and understand why they are important to that community. Children need to see others modelling and acting out the same values around them, and teachers have a particular responsibility to demonstrate the values of the school community to even the smallest children in their care.

West Kidlington Primary in Oxfordshire is one school that has been explicit about the values promoted in the school and it has implemented values education throughout the curriculum. Two of its teachers, Hawkes and Heppenstall write,

*"We have been determined to build a school climate that is quite explicit about a set of values which we believe can be universally accepted as they are not bound by the context of a particular culture or specific religion."* (2000 p.2)

Believing that the ethos of the school should be built on a foundation of core values, they have developed a range of values that are referred to, sometimes at specific times such as in worship or as they relate to different aspects of the curriculum. They have reported that values have proved to be a means for the social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and moral development of the whole child and contributed to raised standards in the school. They believe that this has been achieved by promoting a school ethos which is underpinned by core values that support the development of the whole child as a reflective learner.’ They also report that engaging with values has had a positive effect on the whole school community.

### **The National Curriculum and values**

The National Curriculum attempts to define the kind of education needed for children and young people growing up in a complex and rapidly changing world. Education is described as “a route to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical and mental development, and thus the well-being of the individual.” The National Forum on Values in Education and the Community, initiated by SCAA and set up to consider the extent to which there was a consensus or any agreement on the values, attitudes and behaviour that schools should promote on society’s behalf given the pluralistic nature of society concluded that “there are some shared values but that there is no consensus on the source of these values or how they are applied.” (1999 p.147) In a Mori

poll the general public generally endorsed the statement of 'values' covering society, relationships, self and the environment. (Appendix A) Schools, the document suggests, should feel confident about using the agreed values to inform their ethos and teaching, knowing that they reflect the consensus of the wider society. In fact the National Curriculum invites schools to "decide how these values should be interpreted and applied in a way that reflects the range of views of their wider community." (1999 p.147)

McCarthy believes that whilst on the one hand there is considerable concern to raise standards, particularly in numeracy and literacy, on the other hand schools are deemed to have a vital role in ensuring that the children and young people who pass through them become,

*"Active, caring and committed citizens, aware of their responsibilities not just their rights, globally and environmentally conscious, geared up for the information age, developing skills through lifelong learning."* (ibid. p.80)

It was the Citizenship theme that caught the imagination of education policy makers, resulting in the inclusion of a framework for personal, social and health education and citizenship. Citizenship was to be a statutory requirement at Key Stage 3 from September 2001 and from September 2002 at Key Stage 1 and 2.

## The values of religious schools

Schools have an important role in preparing children to live responsibly and sensitively in a culturally and religiously diverse world. Common schools, which represent multicultural and multi-faith communities, can only promote those values that are acceptable to all, however religious schools have a responsibility, according to their Trust Deed, to support the promotion of faith-related values.

The government's paper *Choice and Diversity* (DFE 1992), which promoted a greater diversity of schools and more choice for parents, expressed support for voluntary schools. It was believed that in such schools the spiritual and moral dimensions of education would be reinforced and a 'set of shared values' would ensure parental support. The chief inspector of OFSTED, in his annual report for 1996–1997, commented on the strong performance of Catholic schools being directly related to their strong ethos. More recently the Church Schools Review Group, chaired by Lord Dearing, in its report 'The Way Ahead' has commented on the distinctiveness of Church schools and the importance of them maintaining and developing that distinctiveness by having core principles and values. It acknowledges that the source of the values of such school communities are likely to be found within the Christian faith and tradition, particularly in the kind of values exemplified in the life and work of Jesus. It reports,

*“The Church school offers a spiritual and moral basis for the development of human wholeness and a sure foundation for personal and social values based on the person and ministry of Christ.” (2001 p.15)*

These principles and values will be,

“The gospel values of loving God and one’s neighbour, as well as the practical outworking of these values in how pupils are taught to conduct themselves and to relate to one another and to God’s world.” (ibid p.14)

The report also notes that many parents at this time welcome an emphasis on Christian values because they are ‘an enduring alternative to the growingly secular values of society.’ This should not, however, be used as a means of indoctrination or a limiting of pupil’s understanding, but rather the provision of education that takes seriously its responsibility to help children critique and dialogue about their own beliefs and values and those of others. It is for this reason that Wright stresses the importance of the school community nurturing its pupil’s into “its values, aims and ultimate spiritual commitments” but why he is cautious of “mere nurture (that) limits pupil’s understanding and insight.” He concludes,

*“The spiritual issues of ultimate truth and ultimate value are the subject of intense dispute and controversy within contemporary society, and consequently schools have a duty to enable children to respond with informed wisdom to such ambiguity.” (1998 p.99)*

## Citizenship education in the curriculum

Whilst government policy continues to emphasis school improvement and the raising of standards, developing cognitive and academic faculties alone is not adequate. Children also need to learn skills to enable them to live in a fast changing, pluralistic world. Alexander (2001) says the school should be a place where “shared values, a sense of community and social cohesion” can be experienced and where children participate in “apprenticeship in citizenship.” The concept of citizenship as contained in the National Curriculum is not that of an extra subject to be taught, although there may be certain components that will need specific curriculum time, rather it is to be understood as adding another dimension that impinges on the whole of the life and work of the school. Alexander says,

*“Citizenship education includes a specific body of knowledge and skills, but is also an approach to learning, teaching and school life which fosters self-confidence, good relationships, responsible behaviour, enquiry, communication and active participation in the school and its community.” (ibid p. )*

Talbot concludes,

*“Only if the school is a healthy community in which relationships are based on trust and concern for others, in which people value wisdom, truth, justice, courage and other such qualities, is it likely that pupils will acquire*

*these values for themselves...To learn such important truths is to have one's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promoted in the best possible way.” (2000 p. 18 )*

A research team from St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School, a VA secondary school, have developed strategies using school values to support a whole school approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and citizenship. The findings of their project indicated that where schools both make explicit and live the values and ethos of the community, citizenship education might be taking place. In addition the core values provide a basis for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the curriculum thereby enhancing the learning experience of children. The processes they use are:

- Identify where the core values are present in schemes of work.
- Introduce core values as learning objectives.
- Develop teaching and learning strategies and assessment criteria.

An audit of the KS3/4 curriculum, undertaken by the research team indicated that the curriculum is full of opportunities for values work. Therefore values teaching does not mean teaching something different, but teaching the subject matter in a way that highlights particular values. There are three main ways in which values can be communicated. Firstly through the content of the lesson, in which case it is the specific subject matter which can be used as a way of

emphasising a particular value, secondly the actual process of the lesson can be used to create an opportunity to interact with the value in question, and thirdly through application to other aspects of life. In a Teacher Training Agency research paper they concluded,

*“Explicit values teaching:*

- *Encouraged pupil responsiveness to social issues and community service;*
- *Required teachers to set their lessons and their subjects in the context of a greater understanding of how the world operates;*
- *Enabled pupils to use and apply values with more discrimination in relation to the curriculum;*
- *Added a spiritual dimension to lessons because it encouraged a reflective searching for deeper meaning to events and issues;*
- *Encouraged critical thinking because it stimulated pupils to make judgements that required abstraction, reflection and speculation.”*

(Midgley et. al. 1999)

### III. REARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### School based background

The case study for this research project was a Church of England/Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary school located in Bristol. The school is a 210-place primary school with seven classes of 30 children. The Reception class is for reception age children only, whilst the other classes are vertically grouped and paired - two Year 1/2 classes, two Year 3 /4 classes and two Year 5/6 classes. In this arrangement staff work together to plan and share their expertise and children are encouraged to develop a caring attitude towards each other. Parents are encouraged to come into the school on a regular basis to assist with a wide range of activities and the 'Friends' of the school aim to develop the relationship between staff, parents, pupils and the wider school family. In a recent inspection the school was described as being 'a lively, caring school with a positive Christian ethos with a very happy, secure and educationally stimulating environment within a Christian context'. Its catchment area is mainly white but the number of families from other ethnic groups is growing. A number of families are Christians who attend either the supporting church or another; other families are in sympathy with the Christian foundation of the school. There are also a small number of Muslims. The school's Trust Deed requires that the school must provide a distinctive kind of education,

one that is consistent with the beliefs of the Anglican and Methodist Church.

### **Research Design**

The research design needed to ensure that the main stakeholders of the school community, that is the governors, the teachers, the pupils and the parents were each given the opportunity to discuss and contribute their ideas and opinions. In such a school there well might be some tension concerning whose values should be promoted. Given the foundation governors responsibility to ensure the school takes seriously the directive of its Trust Deed, they might well decide that they should impose their values. It was decided that a consultation would be the most effective methodology for determining if a there was any degree of consensus. The strength of this methodology was that all the interested parties would have the opportunity to take part, to talk about the issues and have their views noted. The limitations however included the possibility that respondents would reply in a way they thought the researcher wanted them to, saying one thing but actually behaving in a different way. It should be noted that because this case study is specific to this particular school community it is not possible to generalise from the results.

## **1. Consultation on Values**

In order to determine if it is possible to identify a shared set of core spiritual and moral values held by the school community a process of consultation was carried out with governors, teachers, pupils and parents.

### **Governors**

A governors meeting was convened at which the researcher outlined the nature of the research project and the mentor gave a presentation on how a set of core values could be used as a means of promoting SMSC within the school. Then in small groups the governors brainstormed their ideas of important values onto 'post its'. Following that the mentor facilitated a grouping exercise, in which like values were put together and a word chosen to summarise that particular cluster of values. It was agreed that six to eight values would be a manageable number to work with.

### **Teachers**

The teachers, and one member of the support staff, were given similar presentations to that of the governors and also took part in a similar brainstorming exercise.

### **Pupils**

All the teachers kindly agreed to support the researcher in the consultation of pupils. It was decided that each teacher would make

time available during in-class worship, RE or PHSE lessons and in some classes during the literacy hour, for the discussion of values. The sessions were spread over a four-week period culminating in the class agreeing a set of values. For each age group, Reception, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6, the researcher devised a range of activities that could be used to promote the discussion of values in an active and age-related way. The teachers were invited to choose activities they felt comfortable using and that would be appropriate to the pupils in their class. They were also invited to make their own suggestions if they so wished. The teachers were provided with all the necessary materials to carry out the activities e.g. copies of stories and illustrations. The range of activities included role-play, circle time, reading and discussing stories, discussing illustrated scenarios and writing. Examples of the activities can be seen in Appendix B. At the end of the four-week period the researcher talked in small groups with the children from Reception and Key Stage 1 in order to discuss what values they thought were most important. In Key Stage 2 each class contributed to a final brainstorm and then grouped the values to arrive at an agreed set of between six and eight.

### **Parents**

The parent community was consulted using a questionnaire that explained the aim of the research and invited them to think about the values that were important in the school to them and their children. Parents were asked to rank in order of importance a selection of the

values that had previously been suggested from among the governors, teachers and pupils. They were also invited to include any others they wanted to.

## **2. Utilising shared values**

In order to consider if, and how those values might enable spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and citizenship education in the curriculum, a collaborative discussion and reflection in the light of the values consultation took place between the governors (including parent representatives), teachers and support staff as part of an INSET day. A research and development day was arranged during which the teachers were able to explore ways of making connections between the identified values and the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Governors, teachers and support staff then worked in Key Stage related groups to consider where in a selection of Programmes of Study for different subjects, they considered there to be opportunities for 'values interventions' – the term used to describe the process of planning an encounter with a specific value as a learning objective within a scheme of work.

#### IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF VALUES CONSULTATION

##### **Governors**

The governing body consists of the foundation governors who represent the interests of the Anglican/Methodist Church, parent representatives, a representative of the Town Council and the head teacher and deputy head teacher. It is a predominately male group. It was interesting to note that those who were representing the Christian tradition tended to put more emphasis on what might be called 'theological' concerns by suggesting words like 'truth', 'justice', 'mission' and 'peace'. Those who were parents suggested, although not exclusively, values associated with 'nurture', 'instruction' and 'developing talents'. The governors decisively chose the following values: Faith in Christ, Respect, Love, Truth, Justice, Forgiveness and Learning. The cluster of values represented within each of these core values can be seen in Appendix C. The significance of the Christian faith at the heart of the school is to be noted, as well its influence on attitudes towards the wider community.

##### **Teachers**

It was noticeable that the teachers, in contrast to the governors, tended to put more emphasis on values that were important for working together and supporting each other, as well as showing a concern for the development of the children in their care. This is demonstrated in the use of words like 'sharing', 'understanding' and 'caring'. The set of values the teachers decided upon reflects the importance of their relationship as a team and their responsibilities towards the children in

their care: Faith in Christ, Forgiveness, Honesty, Loving each other, Valuing ourselves, Love of Learning, Justice, Responsibility, and Working together. This set is interesting because it reflects the teachers' day-to-day involvement with each other and with the pupils and represents, in contrast to the governors, the ideas of a female group. The cluster of values represented within each of these core values can be seen in Appendix D.

### **Pupils**

In the Reception class the teacher initiated small group circle times in which the children talked about what made them happy. Whilst the resulting comments were wide-ranging some children made perceptive comments such as 'when someone is kind to me' 'people sharing', 'playing nicely', 'being friendly', 'saying sorry if you've been naughty', 'letting people play their games', 'people say sorry', 'learn things that are important', 'people are polite to you' and 'if you are kind to your friends you will be happy because they might get happy'. The researcher also talked to a focus group consisting of some of the more articulate children from the Reception class. When asked what they thought were the most important things about the way we treat others in school they were able to discuss ideas associated with kindness, caring, sharing, friendship. They also talked about responsibility and how they had to help put the toys away and sweep up the sand around the sand pit!

In the Year 1/2 classes the children took part in circle time discussions using the starters 'I don't like it when....' and 'I like it when...'. Most of the children's responses reflected their desire to be on the receiving end of kindness, friendship, and sharing rather than being hurt, having unkind things said to them, being left out of games or losing their friends. (Appendix E) Following these activities the researcher made a collection of word cards that were representative of both the words and ideas expressed by the children. In small groups they were shown an array of them, which they read keenly. If there was a word they didn't know the researcher read it to them. They were then asked to choose a word that they thought represented what was important in the school. After each choosing one and putting it in the centre of the table they were encouraged to look at the others and decide if they wanted to include any other words. Many of even the youngest children were able to explain what the 'value' words meant. The Year 2 children were quick to suggest that some words meant the same e.g. telling the truth = being honest, being fair = sharing, friendship = helping others and respecting others and peace = forgiveness and friendship, although another child insisted that 'Peace' was having a quiet classroom! The predominant values chosen by the Reception and Key Stage 1 children were: Being fair, Telling the truth, Friendship, Responsibility, Love, Christian faith, Being in control of myself and Forgiveness.

In one of the Year 3/4 classes the teacher initiated discussion about important rules for life that led onto the framing of a set of rules for the world. (Appendix F) From these a set of values was chosen. These included Honesty, Forgiveness, Peace, Sharing, Respecting others, Responsibility, Love, Cooperation and Friendship. The other Year 3 /4 class teacher also chose to take a global approach by discussing the issue of fairness with the pupils. They brainstormed using the starter ‘The things in our world that are unfair are...’ and then ‘The world would be more fair if we could...’. (Appendix G) Because the class was due to write poetry as part of their Literacy lessons, the teacher decided to use their discussion as the stimulus for them to write a poem entitled ‘It’s not fair’. She was very pleased with the sensitive way in which the pupils explored some of the issues and some examples of the work produced are included in (Appendix H) The final set of values that this class agreed on consisted of Christian faith, Love, Forgiveness, Telling the truth, Self-control, Cooperation, Responsibility and Being fair.

In the Year 5/6 classes the teachers first of all described a scenario to the pupils and they had to act out a good response followed by a bad response. These classes particularly enjoy role-play of this kind and responded quite positively. Following this the pupils were presented with a range of words that represented different values. The term ‘ethical’ was explained to them and they were asked to decide which words represented ethical values. A lively discussion followed. In the

next session the teachers gave them a value word and they devised their own sketch whilst the other pupils had to think about which value they were portraying. Finally they decided on their set of values. One class decided on Responsibility, Trust, Honesty, Encouragement, Fairness and Being considerate. The other decided on Honesty, Respect, Faithfulness, Kindness, Caring, Helpfulness, Friendliness and Generosity.

Appendix I.

### **Parents**

The parents questionnaire contained a simple explanation of the nature and purpose of the research and described the activities that had already been undertaken with governors, teachers and pupils, A definition of the term 'values' was included along with examples of some of the values that had already been suggested. Parents were invited to rank the values they felt were important to them and their children in the school and were also invited to add any others they wanted to. One hundred and forty questionnaires were distributed to parents, but whether all those reached their destination or not is uncertain. Twenty-nine of them were returned. For this reason the parent's questionnaire was perhaps the weakest aspect of the consultation. Most parents ranked only the values that had already been suggested, although a few added their own. However, an analysis of the results from those who had responded, showed, after weighting, considerable support for the following values: Respect, Faith in Christ,

Telling the truth, Love, Love of learning, Sharing, Friendship and Responsibility. Support for the values of Being fair, Forgiveness, Cooperation and Caring for the environment was also evident. The parent's questionnaire and a more detailed analysis of the responses can be seen in Appendix J and K.

### **Deciding on the core values**

In a school with a Christian foundation, the school's values are rooted in the Christian tradition and will be influenced by and consistent with a Christian worldview. In the consultation the governors, teachers, many of the parents and quite a few children too thought that this was important. With this in mind it was agreed that the value 'Faith in Christ' offered a perspective on and influenced the way in which the other values were understood. Bearing in mind all the different value words suggested during the consultation, the head teacher and the foundation governors, chose the following values: Justice, Love of Learning, Respect—for self and others, Forgiveness, Truth, and Working together. These values express in broad terms clusters of related values that include all those proposed by different parties in the consultation. In order to clarify what was meant by each of these value words and to establish a common understanding of each of them, the researcher then interviewed a selection of children from each year group. In these focus groups the children were asked to describe what they understood each of the value word to mean. It is interesting to note the development in

the way in which each of these were understood and described with increasing age. For example Reception aged children described 'Working Together' in terms of sharing and waiting for your turn, Year 3/4 children spoke of sharing ideas and putting them together. Year 1/2 children described 'Forgiveness' in terms of saying sorry and being friends again, whereas Year 5/6 spoke of seeing other peoples' point of view. The researcher then summarised the main ideas developed by the children. These meanings appear next to each of the values. (Appendix L) It was decided that the values would form the basis of school and class worship at the start of the next academic year and that they would be displayed in all the classrooms.

A comparison of the school's values with the Statement of Values included in Curriculum 2000 demonstrates a number of similar components between the two.

### **The self**

**We value ourselves as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical growth and development.**

- not putting ourselves down (Respect)
- listening to others (Respect)
- being determined and not giving up (Love of Learning)
- listening and trying to understand (Love of Learning)
- enjoying learning and taking pride in our work (Love of Learning)
- being honest and owning up (Truth)

## **Relationships**

**We value others for themselves, not only for what they have or what they can do for us. We value relationships as fundamental to the development and fulfilment of ourselves and others, and to the good of the community.**

- treating everyone the same (Justice)
- being fair and sharing (Justice)
- not putting others down (Respect)
- taking care of others and their property (Respect)
- helping each other, not just our friends (Working together)
- listening to each other's ideas (Working together)
- talking about the best way to put them together (Working together)
- saying sorry and meaning it so we can start again (Forgiveness)

## **Society**

**We value truth, freedom, justice, human rights, the rule of law and collective effort for the common good.**

- standing up for what we believe (Justice)
- taking care of others and their property (Respect)
- listening to others, especially adults (Respect)
- listening and trying to understand (Love of learning)
- being fair and sharing (Justice)

## **The environment**

**We value the environment, both natural and shaped by humanity, as the basis for life and a source of wonder and inspiration.**

- being fair and sharing (Justice)
- thinking and working things out (Love of learning)
- listening and trying to understand (Love of learning)
- standing up for what we believe (Justice)

Whilst the core values of this school are very similar to those that might be held by people of other worldviews and religions, their interpretation and the way in which they form an explanation or 'story' about the world will be quite distinctive. In the same way Islamic, Jewish or secular perspectives would also influence the specific way in which similar values might be understood and interpreted.

### **Analysis of findings**

All participants in the consultation process included values that were relevant to the individual, such as honesty and self-esteem as well as including those that promoted social cohesion and good behaviour, such as respect and caring. The importance of educational achievement was emphasised by the adults, although interestingly, not by the children. Of more importance to them, it seems, is the nature and quality of relationships between themselves and their teachers in their classes and around the school.

All the class teachers spoke of the children's interest and the enthusiasm with which they participated in the activities and discussions. The children's participation in the consultation process provided a context for the discussion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues and the chance for active citizenship to take place. There were opportunities for developing confidence and responsibility as they thought about 'what is fair and unfair, and what is right and wrong' as

well as 'sharing opinions on things that matter to them and explain their views.' It also contributed to their 'preparing to play an active role as citizens' as they participated in 'discussions with one another and the whole class' and a 'simple debate about topical issues' and recognising 'choices they can make and the difference between right and wrong'. (Guidelines: PHSE & citizenship) The researcher was also impressed by the quality of dialogue the children were able to sustain and their ability to handle quite 'adult concepts'. This child-centred constructivist approach to the values consultation provided an opportunity for all children to contribute to the life of the class and school. How these values can be used to support teaching and learning in the curriculum will be considered next.

## V. DISCUSSION OF VALUES IN THE CURRICULUM

The National Curriculum has two broad aims – to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. It is stated that,

*“These two aims reinforce each other. The personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and to achieve. Development in both areas is essential to raising standards of attainment in all pupils.”* (NC p.12)

Where a school has a consensus on its vision and values it has the essential context within which to develop its own curriculum. So, despite the seeming ‘givenness’ of the school curriculum it is possible to both find and create opportunities to consider the school’s values and to engage with a range of spiritual, social, moral and cultural issues. Identifying teaching and learning strategies in programmes of study and schemes of work integrates the school’s core values with what is being taught. Because core values carry spiritual, moral, social and cultural components, an increased use of core values in relation to the taught curriculum can be considered to equate with spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children.

When the teachers looked at the Programmes of Study for some different subjects at both Key Stage 1 and 2 they discovered a number

of places where values work could be included in an explicit way. Some of these are noted here.

## **English**

Key stage 1

*En1 Speaking and Listening*

*Group discussion and interaction*

*3 To join in as members of a group, pupils should be taught to:*

- a. take turns in speaking*
- b. relate their contribution to what has gone on before*
- c. take different views into account*
- d. extend their ideas in the light of discussion*
- e. give reasons for opinions and actions*

All these skills are concerned with the value of 'respect for others'.

During a group activity in the literacy hour, for example, there will be opportunities to practice all these skills. In this example it is the actual process of the group interaction that can be used to explore the value in question.

*En2 Reading*

*Grammatical awareness*

- i understand how word order affects meaning*
- j decipher new words, and confirm or check meaning*
- k work out the sense of a sentence by rereading or reading ahead*

Encouraging a child to work out just what the sentence is saying

requires a determination to succeed and not give up. This is an aspect of a 'love of learning'.

Key stage 2

*En2*

*Literature*

*4 To develop understanding and appreciation of literary texts, pupils should be taught to:*

e evaluate ideas and themes that broaden perspectives and extend thinking

The literature selected for use in the literacy hour can provide many opportunities to consider values, particularly when discussing a character or the plot of a story, or the issues a particular story raises.

*En3 Writing*

*Planning and drafting*

The whole process of planning, drafting, revising, proofreading, presenting and then discussing and evaluating their writing embraces many elements of a 'love of learning' as children think and work things out, make mistakes and ask for help, develop determination to see a task through to the end so that they can take pride in the finished product.

**Science**

Key stage 1

*Sc2 Life processes and living things*

*Humans and other animals*

2e how to treat animals with care and sensitivity

In addition to finding out and talking about how to care for pets and other animals in appropriate ways the discussions could be extended to include 'why' type questions which could raise issues about 'justice' and how we have a responsibility to share the world with animals and treat

them fairly. Such a discussion would most certainly raise spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues.

*4a recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and to treat others*

*with sensitivity*

Here is an opportunity to take learning beyond similarities of features and comparisons of height, shoe size and hair colour only. It is an opportunity to reinforce the value of 'respect – for self and others' by perhaps finding out their different interests, acknowledging others positive qualities.

Key stage 2

*Sc1 Scientific enquiry*

*Investigative skills*

*m review their work and the work of others and describe its significance and limitations*

This particular aspect of the science curriculum requires the interplay of some different values. It calls for 'truth' in that pupils have to subject their own work and that of others to constructive criticism as well as 'working together' and a 'love of learning' as they discuss together to evaluate their work.

*Breadth of study*

*1. During the key stage, pupils should be taught the Knowledge, skills and understanding through:*

*b looking at the part science has played in the development of many useful things*

When thinking about the ‘many useful things’ that science has helped to develop some mention could be made concerning the unfair way in which clean water for example is provided around the world. Consideration could also be given to way in which science has contributed to some of the more dangerous and detrimental things and the effect that these have had in the world. These are issues about ‘justice’ and are an example of how the content can be used to draw out a particular value.

### **Analysis of findings**

The opportunities for explicit values teaching is present in each of the curriculum subjects. An emphasis on a school’s agreed values in the curriculum encourages spiritual and moral vocabulary and sets spiritual and moral development in a real life context. In addition it creates the possibility for a range of learning skills: thinking, reflecting, feeling, purpose and the use of multiple intelligences.

## **RESEARCH OUTCOMES**

### **Pupils**

Primary aged children, including even the youngest, were able to use values related language to talk about issues that were important to their experiences and learning each day in school. In doing so they experienced personal development in terms of increased confidence, expression of opinions and participation skills, and also had opportunities to participate in active citizenship with the school community.

### **Teachers**

Teachers were able and willing to give time to address values with their pupils, thereby creating opportunities to talk about a range of spiritual, moral, social, cultural and citizenship issues. They had considerable interest in and enthusiasm for the project and were pleased with the responsiveness of their pupils and the quality of discussion and work that resulted. The teachers now have some tools to help them plan the integration of core values into existing schemes of work as well as the development of a new PHSE/Citizenship scheme of work that takes account of the core values.

### **Parents**

The involvement of the parents, although somewhat less than the researcher would have liked, was crucial in that not only did it acknowledge the role of parents in the development of children's values,

but it also contributed to the partnership between home and school that is so important in education.

### **Governors**

The values identified from this consultation provide a foundation upon and against which the governors can plan for the development of the school. They can be used to decide the aims of the school development plan, as well as being used to support the school's self-assessment and in the review of school policies.

### **Whole school community**

This research project supported a process of collaboration within the school community that led to the identification of a shared set of core spiritual and moral values. The shared values identified can support the development of a school ethos in which partnership, good relationships and responsible behaviour can flourish and thereby contribute to raising the standards achieved by the school and contributing to its success.

### **The curriculum**

It was evident that the curriculum offers many points at which the school's values can be reinforced. The provision of effective Religious Education will be strategic for the developing an understanding of the religious tradition that informs the school's vision and values. Values interventions will be the means whereby spiritual, moral, social and cultural development takes place, citizenship is fostered and a range of

learning skills are encouraged – all important aspects of meaningful and purposeful education.

<b>Value</b>	<b>What we think it means</b>
<b>Justice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being fair and sharing</li> <li>• Treating everyone the same</li> <li>• Standing up for what we believe</li> </ul>
<b>Love of Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening and trying to understand</li> <li>• Thinking and working things out</li> <li>• Making mistakes and asking for help</li> <li>• Being determined and not giving up</li> <li>• Enjoy learning and take pride in our work</li> </ul>
<b>Respect – for self and others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not putting ourselves or others down</li> <li>• Listening to others, especially adults</li> <li>• Taking care of others and their property</li> </ul>
<b>Forgiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realising we have done something wrong</li> <li>• Saying sorry and meaning it so we can start again</li> </ul>
<b>Truth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being honest and owning up instead of being deceitful so we can be trusted</li> </ul>
<b>Working Together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping each other, not just our friends</li> <li>• Listening to each other’s ideas and talking about the best way to put them together</li> <li>• Sharing equipment and taking turns</li> </ul>

## VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- In what ways and how effectively do existing school policies demonstrate the school's values?
- Does what happens in school day by day match with the school's values?
- What are the main influences on the values of children?
- How can spiritual, moral, social and cultural development be assessed?

## Appendix A

### Statement of values

(The National Forum on Values in Education and the Community)

#### The self

We value ourselves as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical growth and development.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- \* develop an understanding of our own characters, strengths and weaknesses
- \* develop self-respect and self-discipline
  
- \* clarify the meaning and purpose in our lives and decide, on the basis of this how we believe that our lives should be lived
- \* make responsible use of our talents, rights and opportunities
- \* strive, throughout life, for knowledge, wisdom and understanding
- \* take responsibility, within our capabilities, for our own lives.

#### Relationships

We value others for themselves, not only for what they have or what they can do for us. We value relationships as fundamental to the development and fulfilment of ourselves and others, and to the good of the community.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- \* respect others, including children
- \* care for others and exercise goodwill in our dealings with them
- \* show others they are valued
- \* earn loyalty, trust and confidence
- \* work cooperatively with others
- \* respect the privacy and property of others
- \* resolve disputes peacefully.

## Society

We value truth, freedom, justice, human rights, the rule of law and collective effort for the common good. In particular, we value families as sources of love and support for all their members, and as the basis of a society in which people care for others.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- \* understand and carry out our responsibilities as citizens
- \* refuse to support values or actions that may be harmful to individuals or communities
- \* support families in raising children and caring for dependants
- \* support the institution of marriage
- \* recognise that the love and commitment required for a secure and happy childhood can also be found in families of different kinds
- \* help people to know about the law and legal processes
- \* respect the rule of law and encourage others to do so
- \* respect religious and cultural diversity
- \* promote opportunities for all
- \* support those who cannot, by themselves, sustain a dignified life-style
- \* promote participation in the democratic process by all sectors of the community
- \* contribute to, as well as benefit fairly from, economic and cultural resources
- \* make truth, integrity, honesty and goodwill priorities in public and private life.

## The environment

We value the environment, both natural and shaped by humanity, as the basis of life and a source of wonder and inspiration.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- \* accept our responsibility to maintain a sustainable environment for future generations
- \* understand the place of human beings within nature
- \* understand our responsibilities for other species
- \* ensure that development can be justified

- \* preserve balance and diversity in nature wherever possible
- \* preserve areas of beauty and interest for future generations
- \* repair, wherever possible, habitats damaged by human development and other means.

## Appendix B

### Examples of children's activities

#### Y1/2 & R

- Circle time rounds  
I feel really happen when.....  
I like it when people say.....
- In pairs – One thing I like about you....
- Share ideas on qualities needed to be a good friend.
- Write a recipe for happiness

#### Y3/4

- Circle Time – What sort of things, other than objects makes people happy?
- Thinking about friendship – Read and discuss 'The Bear that Spoke' (Stories for Thinking, Robert Fisher, Nash Pollock 1996)
- Do you have any important rules for your life? What are they? (Are you READY? Graham Langtree, RMEP 1997)
- 'It's not fair!' – The world would be more fair if... (ibid)
- Make two columns on the board and label them Actions in a Peaceful World and Actions in a World of Conflict. Generate ideas for each list. Extend to A Peaceful School/A School with Conflict. (<http://www.living values.net/>)

- Time capsule – “*What 10 items would you choose to put in a time capsule to let future generations know more about a peaceful world?*” (ibid)
- Baking a World Cake – What are the finest human qualities you think should be in the ‘World Cake’
  - choose ingredients
  - choose amounts
  - instructions for mixing and baking

They could talk with their families about it and invite them to share their ideas.

(ibid)

Y5/6

- Role play scenarios that demonstrate ethical values – the kind of values that have to do with being good or doing the right thing (<http://www.globalethics.org>)
- Circle Time – Think about their own positive qualities and then the positive qualities of another person.
- Imagining a Peaceful World – imagining exercise, then in groups draw their experiences, asking “*What kind of words and behaviour helped everyone stay peaceful?*” (<http://www.living values.net/>)
- Review the Millennium Resolution. In pairs generate ideas to complete ‘Let there be....’
- Travelling into the future – elements you want there to be in your world in the future. (Values and Visions: A Handbook for spiritual development and global awareness, Burns & Lamont, Hodder and Stoughton 1995)  
They could talk with their families about it and invite them to share their ideas.
- Thinking about hope – Pandora’s Box (Stories for Thinking, Robert Fisher, Nash Pollock 1996)

## Appendix C

Results of Values brainstorm carried out with governors

<b>Value</b>	<b>Brainstormed values</b>
<b>Faith in Christ</b>	worship, faith, Christ at centre
<b>Respect</b>	respect, security, acceptance, respect for each other, caring, self esteem
<b>Love</b>	
<b>Truth</b>	honesty, trust, truth
<b>Justice</b>	justice, community, mission, communication, social conscience
<b>Forgiveness</b>	peace, patience, forgiveness
<b>Learning</b>	nurture, instruction and guidance, stimulating, growth, making the best of talents, love of learning, fulfilment, opportunity for all, achieving potential

## Appendix D

Results of Values brainstorm carried out with teachers

<b>Value</b>	<b>Brainstormed values</b>
<b>Faith in Christ</b>	prayer is valued/encouraged, love because we are loved, promote relationship with God individually and corporately, glorify Jesus amongst us, witness, faith, sharing faith, worship, the gospel of Christ
<b>Forgiveness</b>	reconciliation, forgiveness
<b>Honesty</b>	learning through mistakes, honesty, truthfulness
<b>Loving each other</b>	love your neighbour, mutual support and working together, supportive, affirm each other, sharing with each other, caring, support one another, patience, understanding differences in people, understanding, encouraging, love, respect, caring for each other
<b>Valuing ourselves</b>	value each individual, self-esteem, commitment, valuing whole child, building up confidence, self-awareness
<b>Love of learning</b>	education is more than just literacy and numeracy, balance, acknowledge success/achievement of all kinds, sharing knowledge, developing skills and interests, love of learning,

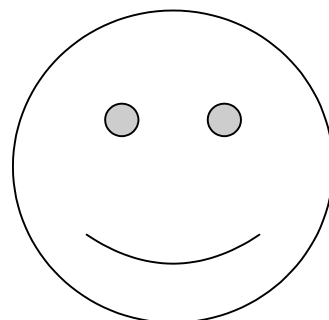
<b>Justice</b>	being fair
<b>Responsibility</b>	responsibility
<b>Working together</b>	

## Appendix E

Example of 'Circle Time' discussion

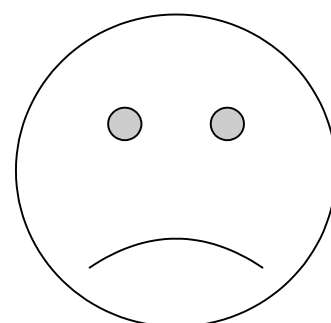
### Willows like it when.....

- Children are nice and kind to them
- They help find something that's lost
- Children are good friends and play
- They have fun together
- They play football together
- Children share



### Willows don't like it when.....

- They get punched, kicked or bullied
- They fall over
- They lose things
- Children hurt them or their friends
- Children say unkind things and be unkind
- Children are shouting, making loud noises or



don't stop talking

- They lose their friends

## Appendix F

A set of rules for the world

1. Treat people as you want to be treated. Love your neighbour as yourself.
2. Don't fight.
3. Don't swear or use words that would hurt someone.
4. Don't pollute the earth unnecessarily.
5. Don't poison people, attack or hurt people.
6. Don't wrongly accuse. Only accuse with strong evidence.
7. Don't judge someone just by their appearance.
8. Don't kill animals unless it is for a reason (e.g. food).
9. Share food, clothes, toys etc. to help others. Be fair when you share.
10. Do not kill innocent people.
11. Don't steal.

devised by children in a Year 3 and 4 class

## Appendix G

A discussion on the theme 'It's not fair'

Definition: Sharing, everyone the same, honest, not accusing falsely, not cheating, not making fun, playing fair, keeping the rules, treat as you want to be treated, respect.

The things in our world that I think are unfair.....	The world would be more fair if we could.....
<p>God's world treated badly            Killing people and animals            Hunting            Kidnapping            Stealing partner (adultery)            Wars            Stealing            Revenge            Ingratitude            Endangering wildlife            Clearing rainforests            Foot and mouth            Judging people by the way they look            Accusing falsely            Putting someone down            Having less attention as you get older            Not forgiving            Orphans            Pollution            Selling guns</p>	<p>Stop selling guns            If people were helpful            If people didn't swear            Stop people killing/kidnapping            Stop stealing - offer a better life            Ban cigarettes, alcohol and drugs            Be friends            Plant more trees            Recycle things            Stop hunting            Keep promises            Talk over problems            Safer roads</p>

Year 3 and 4

## Appendix H

Examples of children's poems on the theme: 'It's not fair'.

*It's not fair  
In Africa there's no food to eat  
It's not fair  
There is a war in some of the countries  
It's not fair  
Some people's Mother and Father get to die  
It's not fair  
People sell guns  
It's not fair  
Mean people kill little children  
It's not fair  
Farmer's take of poor animals  
It's not fair  
People ignore their parents  
People trough litter on the floor.*

Hamazah Odeh, aged 9

*It's not fair!  
That people don't have food.  
It's not fair!  
That people don't have homes.  
It's not fair!  
That people get kidnapped.  
It's not fair!  
That people have nothing.  
IT'S NOT FAIR!*

Joanna Wood, aged 7

## Appendix I

Results of Values brainstorm carried out with children

<b>Poplars Y5/6</b>	<b>Oaks Y5/6</b>
Responsibility Trust Honesty Encouragement Fair Considerate	Honesty Respect Faithfulness Kindness Caring Helpfulness Friendliness <i>Generosity</i>
<b>Sycamores Y3/4</b>	<b>Rowans Y3/4</b>
Christian faith Love Forgiveness Telling the truth Being in control of myself Cooperation Responsibility Being fair	Honesty Forgiveness Peace Sharing Respecting Others Responsibility Love Cooperation Friendship
<b>Cedars, Willows and Chestnuts Y1/2 &amp; R</b>	
Being Fair Telling the truth Friendship Responsibility Love Christian faith Being in Control of myself Forgiveness	

## Appendix J

### Dear Parents

In September 2000 I was awarded a DfEE Scholarship to undertake a school based research project.

The aim of my research is:

- To identify the core spiritual and moral values held by our school community.
- To consider how these values can help us in our approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and Citizenship across the curriculum.

The governors and teaching staff have considered the values they think are important to our school community.

Recently, the children also took part in activities that enabled them to talk about what they think is important in our school. You may want to ask them what they did and what values they suggested!

**I would now like to ask you, the parent community of our school, to consider the values that you think should be at the heart of our school and what goes on in it.**

After reading the definition on the next page and looking at examples of the values that have already been suggested, please take a moment to think about what really matters to you and your children. Then turn over to complete the questionnaire.

**Helen Jelfs**  
Teacher

**Values** are *principles and fundamental convictions which act as guides to behaviour, enduring beliefs about what is worthwhile, ideals for which one*

**Caring for the environment**

**Respecting**

**Responsibility**

**Cooperation**

**Faith in Christ**

**Sharing**

**Love**

**Friendship**

**Telling the Truth**

**Forgiveness**

**Being**

**Fair**

**Love of Learning**

**Self – Control**

# Appendix K


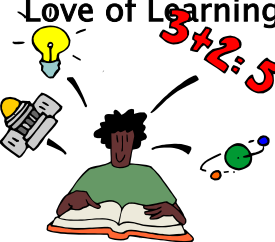



Table to show the results of the values chosen by parents in order of importance after weighting.

Value	Total Weighting
Respect	190
Faith in Christ	141
Telling the Truth	122
Love	109
Love of Learning	101
Sharing	100
Friendship	92
Responsibility	84
Being Fair	67
Forgiveness	67
Cooperation	62
Caring for the Environment	35
Self Control	29
Honesty	9
Peace	9
Christian Values (not Faith)	9
Maintain spirit and individuality	9
Self Discipline	8
Compassion	8
Family Atmosphere	8
Self Worth	8
Integrity	6
Reconciliation	5
Self Growth through Learning	3
Community Links	3
Prejudice (not being)	2
Personal Relationship with God	2
Justice	2
Joy	2

## Appendix L

A shared set of core spiritual and moral values

# Faith in Christ means that we value:

<p><b>Justice</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being fair and sharing</li><li>• Treating everyone the same</li><li>• Standing up for what we believe</li></ul>
<p><b>Love of Learning</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listening and trying to understand</li><li>• Thinking and working things out</li><li>• Making mistakes and asking for help</li><li>• Being determined and not giving up</li><li>• Enjoying learning and take pride in our work</li></ul>
<p><b>Respect – self</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not putting ourselves or others down</li><li>• Listening to others, especially adults</li><li>• Taking care of others and their property</li></ul>
<p><b>Forgiveness</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Realising we have done something wrong</li><li>• Saying sorry and meaning it so we can start again</li></ul>
<p><b>Truth</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being honest and owning up instead of being deceitful so we can be trusted</li></ul>
<p><b>Working Together</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helping each other, not just our friends</li><li>• Listening to each other's ideas</li><li>• Talking about the best way to put them together</li><li>• Sharing equipment and taking turns</li></ul>

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<http://www.livingvalues.net>