

St. Margaret's Collier Street Church of England Primary School – What does it mean to us to be a church school?

St. Margaret's Collier Street Church of England Primary School is a caring, Christian community. Our whole school community of children, parents, staff and governors have contributed to articulating our vision for the education we aim to provide. As a parent, pupil, visitor or member of staff, you will find that our school aims to offer the best education as other schools would, although the way in which the school works is distinctive.

The distinctive difference is rooted in our Christian values that affect the way in which everyone behaves and the way in which everyone is respected. In order to nurture children's spirituality, we ensure that St. Margaret's Collier Street CE Primary School:

- Is led by a Headteacher who is committed, with the help of staff, to maintaining the Christian character of the school.
- Is a place where the right 'growing' environment is created, enabling every child to be nurtured and consequently flourish.
- Enables children to engage meaningfully in a daily act of Christian Worship.
- Offers school life that incorporates the values of the Christian faith.
- Ensures that 5% of curriculum time is committed to Religious Education.
- Observes the major Christian festivals.
- Ensure children of other faiths are able and encouraged to mark their major festivals with integrity.
- Maintains and develops an active relationship with the local Church.

Christian Distinctiveness:

A rural community, learning and growing together, sharing the love of God. We believe that each individual will be inspired and nurtured so that they flourish in their learning, relationships and personal growth so that together we discover life in all its fullness.

As an Anglican Church School, we create and sustain an ethos based on the Christian values of friendship, fairness, respect and helpfulness. We aim to nurture and develop positive spiritual, moral, social and cultural attitudes within our community. Religious Education and collective worship are central to the life of our school, whilst reflecting the rich variety of religious traditions and diversity of our society.

We provide a secure, happy and well-disciplined environment in which individuals flourish. Our expectations for achievement are high. We inspire children to develop a love of learning, broadening their creativity and enabling them to discover their full potential. The curriculum will aid this by particularly focusing on:

1. Globalisation and interdependence
2. Identity and diversity
3. Concern for the environment
4. Self-awareness and reflection /Empathy
5. Critical and creative thinking

Consequently, we aim for our pupils to leave this school as responsible and assured individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education and who will make a valuable contribution to society.

Our strong Christian distinctiveness is recognised as providing a unique commitment to nurturing and valuing all God's children in our community. We encourage all to learn about the

Christian faith but recognise that becoming a Christian is a personal choice of faith and we are respectful of each other's beliefs.


Our Vision: Our vision has evolved over years building upon the phrase '**Learning as we Grow, Growing as we Learn, Rooted in Jesus.**'

We know that children need both a strong academic foundation and well-developed character to succeed in education and the world beyond. Our vision is to help all of our pupils to develop Christian distinctive qualities so that pupils leave this school as responsible and assured individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education and who will make a valuable contribution to society.

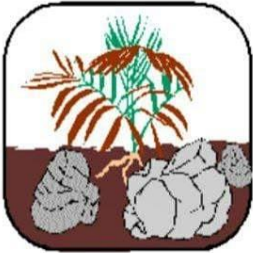
During the academic year 2019/20 and mindful of the Church of England's Vision for Education for 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10), stakeholders decided that the vision statement needed reviewing and this started with identifying the story of the Parable of the Sower.

The Parable of the Sower


The Seed is the Word of God



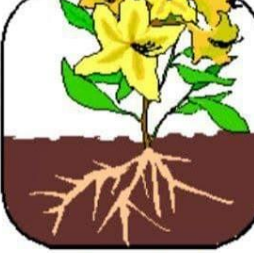
The Path



The Rocky Soil



The Weedy Soil



The Good Soil

What type of Soil are You?
Is God Growing in Your Heart?

All of our values were chosen to ensure that with the right 'growing conditions' and being rooted in Jesus' word, we will help everyone in the school community to flourish and fulfil their potential within a Christian and caring environment.

Our values:

Friendship We aim for all the children to know what it is to be a good friend and the importance of reaching out to those we may find more challenging. "One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Proverbs 18:24

Fairness We aim for all the children to act and treat others with fairness at the heart of their decision making. Treat people the same way you want them to treat you. Luke 6: 31

Helpfulness We aim for all the children to help and assist in this community but also recognise that there they can play an essential part in helping and supporting others further afield. "If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up." Ecclesiastes 4:10

Respect We aim for all the children to know what it means to be respectful to ourselves, one another and in our work commitments. 'Show proper respect to everyone.' | Peter 2v17

We aim for all the children to take responsibility and grow in independence as they mature in school. We aim for all children to understand and show what it means to be responsible, becoming independent and role models to others by always doing the right things even when no one is looking. 'Whatever you do, do it from the heart for the Lord and not for people' Colossians 3:23

Spirituality:

At St. Margaret's Collier Street, we develop our spirituality through recognising awe and wonder. We encourage everyone to take time to be still and reflect, to observe the world, the everyday and the extraordinary and be fascinated by the discoveries we make. We want everyone to develop a willingness and an ability to ask and explore 'unanswerable' questions and to have a sense of something other than ourselves. Children are also given the chance to visit our new Spiritual Garden designed and created by the school alongside 2 parent volunteers.

We hold daily acts of Collective Worship, as a whole school and occasionally at our local church St Margaret's for special services in the church year. Our themes for Collective Worship follow Diocesan plans but we are mindful of the need to make links to our values and link directly to passages from the Bible showing how we can live out God's word in our daily lives. The pupil leader of the collective worship, then welcomes God's spirit to be with the worship time by saying, '*May the Lord be with you*' whilst lighting the candle. The school responds with, '*And also with you*'. The Bible passage or message is delivered as interactively as possible in order to support understanding, create memories and a desire to reflect on the message given. Our worship themes are displayed in the hall. We finish our time of Collective Worship with time to reflect and a prayer led by the leader/children and then our dismissal from the hall. We hold Celebration Worship where we celebrate the achievements of that week and announce the pupils who have been recognised and awarded for displaying the school values. Pupil voice is gathered regularly from all age ranges to monitor the impact of Collective Worship.

RE:

Our RE is based on the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. Understanding Christianity aims to support pupils in developing their own thinking and their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it. Key questions are explored through a multidisciplinary approach, including philosophy and theology, what Christians believe and think about God and how religious beliefs shape and influence everyday life.

We explore core Bible texts by:

Making sense of the text – what does the Bible say to Christians?

Understanding the impact – how does this impact on how Christians live and how they put their beliefs into action in diverse ways within the Christian community and in the world?

Making connections – how do Christians feel about these ideas and values and how they link them to their own lives and ways of understanding the world.

The 'Golden Threads' aims to deepen and broaden teaching and learning and to make connections. They are used to strengthen the teaching of world faiths to enable pupils to hold a balanced and informed about religion and belief. Every religion is linked through God – what do people believe and think about God? How does religious belief shape and influence everyday life? Reality- How does learning about this religion cause believers to explore question and challenge an understanding of the world and their place in it? Community- How does belonging to the faith community guide and influence everyday attitudes (head), responses (heart) and actions (hand)?

Prayer and Reflection:

As well as praying within Collective Worship, we pray together in classes during our day including saying grace to give thanks at the start of lunchtime. Each classroom will have a special area identified for reflection. We encourage all children to recognise that special places or times are not needed to pray, reflect or worship. We can pray to God anywhere including our outdoor spaces such as the Spiritual Garden, forest area and wildlife garden. All children are encouraged to write prayers for a variety of occasions within the school year, including for church services.

Courageous Advocacy:

At St. Margaret's Collier Street, we encourage our pupils to become responsible and assured individuals who will continue to make a positive impact in the world they live in. We want our pupils to experience life 'in all its fullness' and aim to create a nurturing family community for our pupils, staff and parents that enables all to feel safe, valued and that they belong. Pupils have the chance to take an active role in our collective worship and our church services. Our older pupils are expected to take on responsibilities such as being Playground Mediators as well as contributing ideas and leading worship.

We help our pupils to develop positive relationships with their peers and adults through exploring our vision and values, what that means as a community through collective worship, our Christian Value Awards and merits. We also discuss how faith helps and supports Christians through disappointments and difficult times. Pupils are encouraged to develop courageous advocacy and to see themselves as agents of change, making the world we live in a better place for everyone. We are a compassionate school community concerned with local and global issues. Each year we collect for Maidstone Day Centre which supports the homeless and vulnerable families. We have made Christmas shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child and we have made cakes to sell at school for various charities. We also participate in fundraising events for Starfish Malawi. Eco Club achieved Green Flag status through fundraising and sponsorship of a rhino.

Our Church:

We have close links with St. Margaret's Church. We are lucky to be able to use this beautiful Victorian church for special services including Harvest, Christmas and Easter as well as for curriculum work. Father Paul leads worship in our school each term.

Our Local Community:

We strive to meet the needs of our rural community. We provide a flexible Breakfast Club and a wide range of after school or lunchtime clubs all of which are offered to children in our school community. We welcome members of the local community to our Christmas Fair and Summer Pet Show and within our school day volunteers help in class, hear readers or run some of our clubs. We try to offer a broad range of activities to enable 'life in all its fullness'. We also actively participate in a range of events within our local community including sending cards to various care homes/organisations, singing carols and providing gifts to some residents of Collier Street as part of Mitzvah Day.

Our Wider Community:

We support key national fundraising events such as Children in Need and Save the Children to foster a sense of being part of a much wider community than our small school. The Eco-Council, who were awarded the Green Flag in 2022, have held days to promote recycling and reducing waste. We also have a link school in Malawi for which we fundraise.

