

Although this piece was written before the Trojan Horse enquiry, it is still relevant to our work to promote British values and prepare children for life in modern Britain...

A Vision for Community Cohesion in a Church School

Let us begin with a child and the Christian imperative to love one another and a common understanding that each child must be surrounded by love in order that he or she might learn to love others.

This child is one part of our school family and the Christian ethos of the school will teach that child to love and respect those around him: his teachers, other staff, the other children and any visitors to the school. This may be observed on a day to day basis as children and staff care for one another but is also evident in our concern for the wider community, and at Christmas parents, children and staff are invited to nominate charities which are particularly special to them for our annual Christmas Appeal; recent recipients have been The Children's Liver Disease Foundation and Marie Curie Cancer Care.

The children then learn that they are part of the village community and are encouraged to extend their love and concern to those who live in Uffington. Each year the children are involved in the parish Harvest Festival and following the service, children in Year 6 deliver greetings cards and posies of flowers to the elderly. When a governor was blinded in a farming accident, the children's immediate reaction was that they needed to buy him a guide dog and so they set about raising funds for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Although the school is situated in a small semi-rural community, we are very aware of our proximity to Peterborough and Leicester and children learn to respect the culture of others through visits to these cities, especially to places of worship. They develop an understanding of just how fortunate we are and that even relatively close to Uffington, there are many people in need. They develop an understanding of how they can help others through activities such as sending harvest gifts of food to St Theresa's Hostel for the Homeless in Peterborough or donating goods to the Stamford Food Bank. The PSHEE curriculum develops children's understanding of disability, gender and race and challenges stereotypes in order to promote tolerance and respect; a

recent display was based upon a song particularly enjoyed by Years 3 and 4, 'People are the same the whole world over'.

The curriculum teaches children an appreciation of their place in an international society; for many years the school has sponsored children in Ghana through Action Aid and there is a very real feeling of responsibility to provide for 'Ayabugri'. When disaster strikes, the School Council respond quickly to raise funds, as seen in their recent appeal for the victims of the Nepal earthquakes. Studies of India, Ghana and China develop children's appreciation of the culture of others and their responsibilities as part of God's family.

Returning to the local community, the school is involved in many collaborative activities with local schools, ranging from sports fixtures to the annual Stamford Churches Together Festival. These provide opportunities for children to meet children and adults from the local area, getting to know one another and learning together thus strengthening their appreciation of their place in society as part of God's family.

In summary, we see each child at the centre of three families; their home family, the school family and God's family. Within each of these families there is a responsibility to love, respect and care for one another; the basis not only of the Christian faith, but of all faiths and indeed, humanity itself.

HRS