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| Motto:- ‘Let your light shine’ *Flourishing together in a Christian community*  Mission:- The mission of our Church school is to discover and develop to the full, the divinely entrusted talents of each individual within a secure, caring Christian community. | Vision:-  At Isleham CE Primary School, we believe that there are no invisible children. Everyone can succeed and be the best they can be. We are all special members of God’s big family. As a generous and nurturing school, we aim to provide an environment where all can flourish and ‘let their light shine’. Together we seek to sow seeds of knowledge, learning and understanding that will help our pupils and staff to have confidence in themselves as they journey through life. As part of this commitment we will celebrate the diverse individual talents, strengths and gifts within the life of our school.  **Matthew Chapter 5:16** You are the light of the world…let your light shine before others.  We want Isleham to be a school where:   * everyone flourishes. * our Christian values make a positive impact on our lives. * we all achieve the best we can. * children make outstanding progress and are ready for life. * learning and teaching is fun, supportive, engaging and motivational. * you can be happy, safe and healthy and grow spiritually. * we all work well together. * relationships are positive and our children have outstanding social skills, excellent cultural development and understand how to make the right choices. * all members of our school contribute to the community as a whole.   ***The Bible verse that sets this vision in context is John 10:10 “****I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*  ***For it is the flourishing in the grace of God that will enable our children to be wise, hopeful, live well together with dignity and respect in God’s world.***  It is a vision that is inclusive to all. We will get out of life what we put into it, for we are all capable and worthy in the eyes of God.  **Corinthians 9:6** Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.’ |

**How are our vision and values rooted in Christian Teachings?**

Vision

**Flourishing together within the love of God.**

As an inclusive and caring church school, we aim to provide an excellent education and develop a life-long love of learning. We see all members of our school family as valued and valuable in the eyes of God, and we will support and challenge everyone to achieve their full potential.

**“I come to bring life in all its fullness.” (John 10:10)**

Values

**Serving Others**: Compassion, Forgiveness, Responsibility, Respect

Jesus teaches that the greatest commandment any person can follow is to, “ ‘Love God… and love your neighbour as you love yourself’” (**Mark 12:30-31**). For Christians, this is the touchstone of human action – stories told by Jesus, such as the parable of the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:25-37**), and ways in which he modelled this teaching in his own life (e.g. **John 13:1-17**) indicate the central place it takes in Christian thought and living.

‘Loving your neighbour as you love yourself’ is exemplified in the way in which Christians seek to serve others. Service requires compassion: a fundamental element of serving others is empathising with their experiences and seeking to transform these experiences for the better. Throughout the gospels, Jesus shows compassion for those around him, including the Samaritan woman (**John 4:1-42**), the paralysed man (**Mark 2:1-12**) and his friend, Lazarus (**John 11:1-44**). Christians believe that by becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ, God understands our suffering and is alongside us when we suffer. They believe God calls them to show compassion towards all those in need.

Serving others is also modelled in the way in which Christians are called to show forgiveness to those who have caused them harm. The Bible describes God as “slow to anger, abounding in love, and forgiving” (**Numbers 14:18**) and Christians pray that God will “forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us” (**The Lord’s Prayer**).  Jesus taught his followers that they, too, should be forgiving, encouraging them to forgive “ ‘seventy times seven’” (**Matthew 18:21-22**). Forgiveness is not easy: it requires letting go of a hurt that has been caused. But the gift of forgiveness can be transformative for the one forgiven and it is in this way that forgiveness is a form of serving others.

Christians believe that all human beings are interconnected. They see each person as valued and valuable because they have been made “in the image of God” (**Genesis 1:26**). This connectedness means that Christians see it as their responsibility to serve all people (**Romans 14:7**). Church schools were original founded to serve the children and families of local parish communities, regardless of whether they belonged to the Christian faith or not. Christians believe that serving others means taking responsibility for the fact that we are all bound together in a single human race, that we should “ ‘love one another as I have loved you’” (**John 13:34**).

Christians work towards a vision of the world as a place of peace, love and justice. In this vision, each person is offered respect in their uniqueness in the eyes of God. Respect means providing all people with what is right and fair for them: life, health, freedom, and dignity. The Bible is full of teachings about treating people respectfully (e.g. **Exodus 23:2, 6**). Paul, one of the founders of the early Christian church, writes in his letter to the Romans that they should “honour one another above yourselves” (**Romans 12:10**). Living respectfully is about creating a culture in which each person recognises that their own good is bound up with the good of others.

**Being a Good Neighbour**: Friendship, Peace, Love, Thankfulness

To help people understand what it means to “ ‘Love God… and love your neighbour as you love yourself’” (**Mark 12:30-31**), Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:25-37**). In it, he answers the question, ‘who is my neighbour?’, emphasising the Christian belief that all human beings are made in the image of God (**Genesis 1:27**) and are therefore to be valued equally. The divisions of society, gender, culture, religion, and so on, can prevent us from seeing our shared humanity and lead us to treat people differently. Christians seek to be a good neighbour to all by seeing the inherent dignity of all human beings and offering friendship to all in recognition of this (**Proverbs 17:17**).

St Peter encourages Christians to “seek peace and pursue it” (**1 Peter 3:11**) and building friendships by being a good neighbour is one way of doing this. The Christian understanding of the Kingdom of God is a society in which all exist peacefully and harmoniously together. It is a society in which nation does not fight against nation (**Isaiah 2:4**), but one in which people recognise each other’s value and act towards each other as good neighbours. Seeking peace is such an important part of the kind of society that God wants that it is mentioned in one of Jesus’ greatest teachings, the Sermon on the Mount (“ ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.’” **Matthew 5:19**).

Being a good neighbour means showing love towards others, even when we don’t know them very well. Christians understand God to be loving (“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.” **1 John 4:16**); Jesus’ sacrifice of his own life on the cross is an example of the greatest love that can be shown (**John 15:13**). Christians seek to imitate his love for humanity by showing love to others – by making sure that they are always being a good neighbour. Love is described in the Bible as the greatest force in the world (**1 Corinthians 13:13**) – it can transform lives and societies, but it will only have power if it is acted upon. It is not enough to be motivated by love to see others as neighbours; Christians must act on this impulse to transform for the better the lives of those around them.

This is an image of a society in which all human beings recognise their shared humanity and are motivated by love to seek the good of others. It is a commitment to ‘being in it together’ and Christians give thanks for this in prayer and in worship. The sharing of bread and wine that occurs during some forms of Christian worship is sometimes known as the Eucharist; this comes from the Greek word, *eucharistia*, which literally translates as ‘thanksgiving’ (**Mark 14:22-23**). For Christians, giving thanks for our relationships with each other is bound up with giving thanks to God. St Paul reminds Christians to “overflow with thankfulness” to God (**Colossians 2:7**). By being good neighbours, Christians are reminded to show thankfulness for the love and friendship they have received from God.

**Fulfilling Our Gifts**: Wisdom, Self-Belief, Hope, Trust

Christians believe that each human being has been created in the image of God (**Genesis 1:27**) and that each human being is valued in the eyes of God (**Luke 12:6-7**). They believe that human beings need to honour this by showing wisdom at all times – this helps them acknowledge what a great gift it is to have been created in the image of God and to be loved by him. The Bible contains a genre of literature called wisdom literature (for example, the book of **Proverbs**). These texts provide Christians with an insight into the way life works; it helps them gain understanding of the consequences of our thoughts, words and actions, as well as offering an opportunity for them to explore the true value of things. Wisdom takes seriously the discernment we gain through life experience and the impact that sharing life experience can have on the growth and flourishing of others. It helps Christians distil the lessons learned from this experience into guiding principles for life.

One of these lessons is the fact that each of us has our own gifts and talents. No single person is the same as another, but each person has their individual role to play in the world. St Paul talks about the “gifts of the Spirit” (**1 Corinthians 12:1**), noting that “there are different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit distributes them” (**1 Corinthians 12:4**). For Christians, this is an acknowledgement of the origin of all gifts: God. St Paul goes on to use an analogy of the different parts of the body comparing themselves to each other and feeling distressed that they are not all the same (**1 Corinthians 12:15-20**). He points out that you don’t need a foot to be an ear or an ear to be an eye: every part of the body has its own job to do and every part of the body is essential to making that body work. In the same way, Christians believe that every person has their own role to play in helping to create a peaceful and just society and they encourage human beings to recognise and give thanks for their own individual gifts and talents. By having self-belief, each person can use their gifts and talents to help themselves and the whole of society flourish.

The opposite of wisdom is foolishness. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus tells a parable about a rich fool (**Luke 12:13-21**). In this story, the rich man is not criticised for his greed, but rather for placing his trust in the wrong things. Christians believe it is vital to place trust in God; they recognise the limitations of human beings and believe that there is more to life than we can see on the surface. Trust provides Christians with hope (**Romans 15:13**); they trust God and they trust in each other in the hope that our society can become more loving, more respectful, more just and more harmonious.

For Christians, hope is not simply the belief that things will get better or that we will keep making progress; instead, hope is grounded in God himself. Christians hope in the “ ‘unfailing love’” of God (**Psalm 13:5**)and its capacity to transform a world of injustice and suffering into a world of peace and love. This is not simply handing over all responsibility to God: Christians understand that they, too, have a role to play in this process. St Paul talks about the power of faith, hope and love (**1 Corinthians 13:13**) and calls Christians to live a life that exemplifies all three.