



Preston Candover CE Primary School

Preston Candover, Basingstoke, RG25 2EE

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Headteacher: Mrs. Simrit Otway

5th September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the start of another exciting academic year. As Chair of Governors, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who recently completed the school's parent survey. The school also sought the views of pupils and staff. The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive and we are grateful for your contributions. Your responses will be borne in mind as we continue to reflect on, and strengthen the way we work.

We feel it is important, particularly for those newer to the school to share some context around the school's values and ethos, which are central to everything we do.

School Values and character development

Some time ago governors, senior leadership, and staff who had sought the views of the children, came together with an adviser from the Diocese. We decided that the distinctive Christian values of Love, Hope and Justice were important to us as a school community.

The core Christian values are very much at the heart of the school and the development of the values is continually evolving. This has been exceptionally well led by the Headteacher and team and fully embraced by all within the school who live and breathe the values. As a school, we continue to discover what these values mean to us and how we live them out through our daily lives. The leaflet on School Vision and Values explains this and is shared with all new parents. The school website goes into greater depth as to how these values are explored within the school and the guidance from the bible.

The Headteacher's research on values led education and 'character' development has also led to the Leadership programme '7 Habits' being rolled out across the school. It is incredibly affirming that every child is empowered to be a leader and develop these life-long skills. Leadership is actively taught weekly to all pupils through this special programme which supports our values. Recently, it has been a joy for governors to hear children talk about their missions, WIGS (wildly important goals) and their new leadership portfolios.

Earlier this year, all of the pupils were consulted on the **theological** vision for the school and after much discussion and reflection they chose '**Encourage each other and build each other up (1 Thessalonians 5:11)**'. An inspiring choice. The pupils have even recorded a song about it which you can hear on the school website!

Governor Involvement

All school Governing Bodies, drawn from the community which the school serves, are very much involved in setting and monitoring the vision and values of the school. Vision and values are different and distinct – vision is about what the school will look like in 3 to 5 years time, but we work and live by the values and enable them to permeate every aspect of school life. In a church school such as ours, the foundational beliefs are those of the Christian Church and they are distinctive. Values and ethos describe the manner in which the school operates.

We ask how these values are distinctly Christian rather than just human values. What is distinctive is what Christians believe is the nature of the God in whom they believe – thus Christians believe in a God who gives Love, Hope and Justice.

Love Hope Justice



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The core values are explored through Collective Worship with each value being the focus each academic term; Love in the autumn term as we form new relationships, Justice in the spring term and then Hope in the summer term as we look forward to the next stage in our learning and transition. Values are also explored within class learning and the SMSC curriculum (Spiritual, moral, social and cultural). Pupils can achieve leadership and values awards where they have demonstrated these actions. We recently discussed these awards with some children, and they felt that it was an exceptional achievement and were extremely proud.

Collective Worship

An act of Collective Worship (CW) happens every day within the school. The whole school gathers together three times a week and there are class and key stage workshops. In the recent pupil survey, pupils have commented on how they enjoyed the singing, music, the calmness of the setting and the symbolic lighting of candles etc. Governors monitor that CW is taking place on a regular basis and attend from time to time. Pupil worship leaders also support with leading collective worship.

Prayer and reflection

Pupils are given opportunities for prayer and reflection during Collective Worship, children are invited to pray together, however if they would rather not pray, they can use the time for reflection. All classes have prayer and reflection areas which the class teachers have spent time developing with the children's views in mind. There is also a prayer tree in the hall on which children can hang prayers and reflections that they have written. There are peaceful areas for reflection in the school grounds and in recent discussions children say they are particularly fond of these. The school is currently in the process of enhancing an outdoor area for quiet reflection.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

Last term the school worked with a Diocesan advisor to look deeper at spiritual development with newer staff to the school. The school enables pupils to develop socially and morally through the SMSC curriculum. Look out for details of the activities that go on within the school as reported via the very informative newsletters.

The school engages in plenty of cultural development activities and school visits. Again, these are all reported in the regular school newsletters.

Global Neighbours award

Congratulations to the school for their work on courageous advocacy and the Global Neighbours award. The award very much recognises the impact of the school ethos and culture in encouraging pupils to be courageous advocates of change.

Religious Education (RE)

As per the national curriculum, dedicated time is given to RE and the school follows the curriculum set by the County and the Understanding Christianity resources. RE is led by an enthusiastic subject leader and delivered with the same high teaching standards as the rest of the curriculum and core subjects.

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Links with the Diocese and Church

Recently, the Headteacher, staff and pupils were involved in interviewing for the recruitment of a new vicar. On appointment, the local parish priest will become a member of the Governing body, and they will be our main link to the local Anglican Church. We hold a number of special services at the church to coincide with the key events in the Christian calendar. Our Year 6 leavers are fortunate enough to attend a wonderful leavers celebration at Winchester Cathedral. Our support of the work of the Winchester Beacon gives a connection with the Anglican church in the slightly wider context. The school has also linked with other churches in the Parish such as St Johns in Northington for the organ project. You can hear the pupil's song on the school website.

Behaviour and community

Preston Candover CE Primary School has very high expectations for behaviour. There is a statement of behaviour principles set by the Governing Body which can be found on the school website. The policy on behaviour has been developed with the values at the heart of it and focuses on positive relationships.

Governors regularly observe the consistent messages which create a calm atmosphere. Children are given clear boundaries which enable them to feel safe. We are consistently impressed by the children's excellent behaviour, an observation echoed by external visitors. Our whole school community is engaged in supporting this ethos of positive behaviour that builds others up.

Staff are instrumental in promoting the Christian values in the school. When we have attended school events it is obvious how all staff live and breathe those values through their relationships with the children and each other.

As governors we live those values through giving our time freely and entirely in the interests of others. Governance is not about self-advancement but of service to others. The rewards are seeing the children in our school thriving in a happy and caring environment, leaving as well-rounded individuals who want to make a difference in the world.

Aspirational leadership drives the school's embedded vision and governors have witnessed strong teamwork across the school. It is this culture of high expectations that have contributed to pupils' excellent academic and personal achievements.

Regarding leadership, we are delighted to share with you that Mrs Otway has been asked by the Local Authority to support another school this term to strengthen their leadership capacity. She will carry this out alongside her duties at our school. I hope that you will join me in wishing Mrs Otway, her team, all our pupils and our school community a positive start to the new term and every success in the coming academic year.

Mrs Penny Parkinson

On behalf of Preston Candover CE Primary School Board of Governors

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