



St Nicolas' CE Combined School

An Oxford Diocese and Buckinghamshire Academy
Jesus said, 'I am the vine and you are the branches.'

Our Christian Distinctiveness

Our School Vision

Jesus said 'I am the vine and you are the branches'. John 15:5

Our school is rooted in the Christian Faith. Nourished by God, we want to grow together drawing on His strength to live out our Christian values so that we can reach out to others in our community.

We are all unique and together with God we want to be the best that we can be. As we learn together in a supportive and nurturing school, we will thrive and be ready to face the challenges of life.



Strong Christian values are at the heart of our work and central to our ethos, teaching and learning and behaviour policy. We aim to be a centre of excellence which serves our local community, living and modelling these values which permeate through every aspect of school:

love and friendship, respect, honesty, courage, thankfulness and peace.



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We aim to fulfil our vision and create a nurturing Christian environment where children (and the whole school community) work to be the best they can be, ready to face the next stage in their education and life's challenges.

We build and nurture strong links between our school, families, parish and local community, actively promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children through our Christian values and the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and world views.

We are deeply committed to safeguarding all of our community, ensuring a safe environment for living and learning.

Daily collective worship, prayer and reflection

Collective worship takes priority at 9am each day and takes various forms from 'Open the Book' dramatised Bible stories, to assemblies where we reflect on current issues in the news to Friday celebration assemblies and termly prayer partner assemblies when older children reflect and pray with younger children. We teach the children to use 'Space Makers', a contemplative toolkit which offers opportunities for mindful meditation, deeper reflection and spiritual self-growth.

There are opportunities for prayer during daily collective worship and during the day in class. Each classroom has a reflection area where children can pause for quiet time or to pray. A simple grace is said before lunch and children write their own class prayers to mark the end of the day.

OFSTED comments about the Christian character of the school :

'St Nicolas' school strives to encourage all to flourish as unique individuals.' *The school 'places a high priority on ensuring pupils know and understand the school's values of love, friendship, respect, honesty, courage, thankfulness and peace, which permeate the school.'*

Ofsted highlighted a parent's comment that 'the school has an inclusive ethos and welcomes all.'



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'Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of respecting, accepting and tolerating the views and beliefs of others which show that the school is actively promoting British values.'

We are a church school – what does that mean?

As a church school, St Nicolas' Church of England Combined School aims to develop its religious character, respecting the principles of the Church of England and promoting Christian values through the experience we offer to all our pupils. We are fully inclusive of children and families of all faiths and those with no faith. We encourage our children to reflect, question, understand and live by these values, which we all agree are universal.

How can you tell we are a church school?

Our school vision is evident to all as soon as they walk into the school. Every child is a grape on a huge vine that extends from the front entrance and along the corridors to each classroom. Our children are able to talk about our Christian values which run through every aspect of school life. Each of our values is illustrated through artwork created by each class to represent their class value. Each classroom has an area for spiritual reflection and prayer, and a spirituality journal which the children are encouraged to use to capture moments of awe and wonder.



We meet for collective worship daily and our school logo represents the cross and the vine. Our motto is 'Living and learning together with God'.



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Reverend Jane is a regular visitor and leads an interactive assembly each week. We visit St Nicolas church for Christian services throughout the year: Easter, Pentecost, harvest, Christmas and St Nicolas' day. The school and church community join us for these celebrations and services. This enables the children to develop an understanding of the Christian faith and to experience the special atmosphere of the church. The children also participate in key Christian events in school and present assemblies and other performances to their families and the community.



Our RE curriculum

RE lessons are a time for big questions, discussion and reflection – recorded as a whole class in their RE big book. RE lessons are inclusive and teach about Christianity and other world views in line with the Diocesan scheme and 'Understanding Christianity'. During the year, St Nic's children visit other places of worship as part of the RE curriculum.

Children at St Nic's enjoy RE as a time for creative discussion and deeper thinking.