



What does it mean to be a Church of England School?

KernowLearning

This document is designed to provide you with an overview of what being a Church School is all about. Where it started, what makes Church Schools different and special, what this means for us now and the expectations of our school and how we're held to account.



So, what's the history?

Before the government became involved with providing education for everyone in England there were church schools and other charitable schools. The majority of church schools were built in the 1800s and when they were built there were two requirements of them: to teach Christianity through 'Religious Instruction' and to hold a regular act of worship.

When the state became involved with providing mass education, church schools became integrated into the education provided by the state. All these schools are known as maintained schools - they are funded by and built by the state. All maintained schools, including Church school, have to teach Religious Education and hold a daily act of worship. So church schools work on the same basis as community schools.

The Bishops' C of E Learning Academy is named after four Bishops of Cornwall. Conan, Kenstec, Leofric and Wulfsidge who were all medieval Bishops of Cornwall. Our school started in 1978 as the population of Newquay and the surrounding villages increased.



The purpose of a Church of England school is to offer a spiritual dimension to the lives of young people, within the traditions of the Church of England, in an increasingly secular world.

25% of primary schools in England have a Church foundation. Here in Cornwall (the Diocese of Truro), there are 43 Church Schools which are part of 12 multi academy trusts (MATs). There are four Church schools in our Trust: Wendron C of E School near Helston, St Francis C of E and King Charles C of E school in Falmouth, and The Bishops' C of E Learning Academy in Newquay.

What's added through being a Church School?

Church schools have Christian beliefs and values at their heart. This means that every child and adult associated with the school is not just important because they are members of the school but because they are seen as unique individuals within God's creation.

For us, here at The Bishops', our manta '**Faith to Belong, Believe, Aspire and Achieve**' is based on the Parable of The Mustard Seed: *If you have faith as small as a mustard seed you can say to this mountain, move from here to there and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you. Matthew 17:20.* The children experience Christian values throughout the year which act as emotional foundations for the future: Perseverance, compassion, respect, forgiveness, trust and courage.

Our Christian Vision at The Bishops' is:

We belong to Team Bishops' where through our Christian distinctiveness and nurturing ethos we celebrate our differences. **We believe** that we will achieve through inspirational, exciting and challenging learning that utilises our natural environment. **We aspire** to create endless possibilities for our pupils and to make a positive contribution to society. **We achieve** by enabling every child to flourish academically, spiritually and emotionally.

Church schools like us recognise that as well as academic and emotional intelligence human beings also have spiritual intelligence. The spiritual aspects of life will be recognised and nurtured alongside the academic and emotional needs of all.



increasingly secular world.

Church schools are places where challenge through questioning is encouraged as through this we can make sense of the world, the gift of life and the purpose of our own personal lives. We ask big questions every day and these are a central part of the **Big Questions** we answer as part of our 'topics'. The purpose of a Church of England school is to offer a spiritual dimension to the lives of young people, within the traditions of the Church of England, in an

What differences might you notice?

As a pupil, family member, visitor or colleague you should find that a Church School is as good as any other good school but you should **feel** that the way the school works is different and distinctive. That's what people say when they come to our school. That's what makes us special and we believe that distinctive difference is because our entire existence and purpose is rooted in **Christian values** that affect the way everyone is respected.

What else?

Church schools are encouraged to:

- ensure that the school is led by a headteacher who is committed, with the help of staff, to establish and maintain the Christian character of the school in its day to day activities and in the curriculum
- engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship every day
- offer a school life that incorporates the values of the Christian faith
- ensure that religious education is given at least 5% of school time and that the character and quality of religious education are a particular concern of the headteacher and the governing body
- observe the major Christian festivals and in schools where other faiths are present ensure that those faiths are able and encouraged to mark their major festivals with integrity
- maintain and develop an active and affirming relationship with a parish church



How does being part of a Trust and the Diocese make a difference?



DIOCESE OF TRURO
DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM
GROWING THE CHURCH

Church Schools within academy trusts and Dioceses are all about **partnerships** and **collaboration**. It's about working together for and with each other.

For us, as part of **Kernow Learning** and the **Diocese of Truro** families of schools it sees us supporting our fellow Church Schools to ensure that we fulfil the Church of England's Vision for Education, our vision has a theological base and is lived out. We also work with fellow Church Schools to ensure that our curricula are expressions of our school and Trust visions

and that we enable to worshipping life of our schools.

For all schools in our Trust, it means that we share our expertise to support others in fulfilling the expectations of worship in schools, the quality of learning in RE is strong and we can ensure that the spiritual development of pupils is supported.

Proudly part of

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How are we held to account?

Church Schools are inspected by Ofsted like all other schools. We are also inspected as part of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) framework roughly every four to five years. Our most recent inspection saw us recognised with an 'outstanding' grading.



As well as through inspection, we are held to account by our Governors and the Trustees of our Trust as well as other Executive Leaders and our own self-evaluation frameworks. At least one governor on our Board is a 'foundation governor' which means that their appointment is supported by the Diocese.

If you'd like to know more about the work of our school, our Trust or our Diocese, you can make contact with us here at school and we can put you in touch. Alternatively, here are some websites you can visit for more information: Our school website: www.thebishops.kernowlearning.co.uk Kernow Learning: www.kernowlearning.co.uk Diocese of Truro: www.trurodiocese.org.uk