

## **Travis St. Lawrence School Vision: Theological Rationale**

Together we belong, believe, learn, achieve, reflecting the interdependence at the core of Christian understandings of God and life, having faith to grow us through challenge, becoming learners who reflect the way Jesus taught and developing a vision of achievement that is rooted in our flourishing as God's creation.

The children, staff, governors and parents have shaped our school vision. Underpinned by the 'Parable of the Sower', we believe we can all be 'the good soil' and grow through learning every day to be the best versions of ourselves.

### **Belong**

At Travis we build our educational philosophy on the truth that "We are only persons with each other: our humanity is 'cohumanity', inextricably involved with others, utterly relational, both in our humanity and our shared life on a finite planet."<sup>1</sup> This means we prioritise belonging and the understanding that we are all part of the school community, recognising our Trinitarian faith and the image of persons that are individual and also interdependent. This translates into core values of tolerance and respect for all identities and differences. We value one another, manifesting tolerance and respecting and celebrating differences.

We also draw on St Paul's image of the body as a corporate identity in which individual parts live, move and have their being: "We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body." (Romans 12:4,5). Teamwork is a key value of our school, affirming the belief that "education needs to have a core focus on relationships and commitments, participation in communities and institutions."

We are constantly looking at how belonging and togetherness both grow and nurture the individual child while also growing and nurturing the community. This interaction is always in our sights.

### **Believe**

At Travis St Lawrence, to believe means to believe in ourselves and have faith. For us faith is defined using the famous verse from the New Testament: "To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see" (Hebrews 11:1).

At Travis St. Lawrence children will have a mindset of faith evidenced in a growth mindset that reflects the belief that "becoming is better than being." We affirm the Church of England's Vision for Education in which Jesus "inspires both a realism about how flawed and fallible we are and a confidence in transformation for the better."<sup>2</sup>

In that spirit, we nurture the courage to take risks and resilience to keep going when things are tough.

"In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the

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<sup>1</sup> Church of England Vision for Education p.7

<sup>2</sup> Church of England Vision for Education p.10

starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment."<sup>3</sup>

The word "through" is central to this aspect of our vision. We want children's resilience to enable them to hope and believe through the challenges they face, reflecting the faith and life of Jesus Christ which is "fundamental not only to affirming the goodness of life but also to facing and finding ways through whatever goes wrong with ourselves and our communities."<sup>4</sup>

## **Learn**

"Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed" (1 John 3:2). At Travis St Lawrence we see learning as constantly striving to be the best versions of ourselves through knowing more, remembering more and being able to do more.

The Church of England affirms the way in which Jesus formed a community of learners<sup>5</sup> and made them independent and active learners, both when he sent them out to do his work (Luke 10:1ff), and also when: "Jesus also breathed his Spirit into his followers so that they could be led further into the truth (John 16:13) and carry on doing as he did (John 20:21-22), initiating communities of teaching and learning that are now present in every country."<sup>6</sup>

At Travis St. Lawrence we look to a learning experience that nurtures independence, enabling learners to take ownership of learning. To enable such independence our children will grow in knowledge, knowing more and remembering more.

We also commit to active learning, reflecting the way Jesus teaching often told a story to be thought about (e.g. Luke 14:28) or question to be considered (e.g. Matt 21:28). At Travis, learners will actively take part in lessons and learning.

## **Achieve**

'A compelling vision of flourishing life is not a luxury... It is a basic need' Miroslav Volf. At Travis St Lawrence, children flourish. we create a vision of success for every child, and a pathway to it. Our children know how to succeed and do their best in progressing towards their goals. "We aim to deliver excellence in education and want the very best outcomes for children and young people so that they can achieve their fullest potential."<sup>7</sup>

We nurture the drive to succeed in all areas of life, in school and beyond, now and in the future.

We draw on the story of the mustard seed. Jesus gave this as an image of the kingdom of God. We apply it to our own flourishing:

'Jesus asked, "What is the Kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it with?

It is like this. Someone takes a mustard seed and plants it in his field. The plant grows and becomes a tree (Luke 13:18,19a).

However, such success is not self centred. Taking the advice of Brene Brown, that "Defining success is one of the most powerful things you can do" we promote community and courageous advocacy as ways of widening the horizons of learners to appreciate the way their success will change the world, for the better.

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<sup>3</sup> Carol S. Dweck 'Mindset: the new psychology of success'

<sup>4</sup> Church of England Vision for Education p.10

<sup>5</sup> Church of England Vision for Education pp.8-9

<sup>6</sup> Church of England Vision for Education p.9

<sup>7</sup> Church of England Vision for Education p.3