



VbE

Values-based Education

The beating heart of education

VbE Quality Mark
Audit Report

*Recognising high quality practice through
Values-based Education*

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Aspect 1 – Wellbeing

Wellbeing is at the heart of a values-based school. The care of staff and pupils is paramount for their mental health and for creating a person-centred learning environment, which fosters mutual respect. It is crucial that once a school has agreed its values then there is a discussion about how adults will model (live) them. Being a role model, a person looked to by others as an example to be imitated, implies being the sort of person you hope children will want to become.

*The term **atmosphere** encapsulates other descriptors, such as ethos and environment. It refers to the palpable ambience that characterises a VbE school, which Neil describes in his book, *From My Heart, transforming lives through values* (Hawkes, 2013).*

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive human values explicitly underpin the entire life of the school. ● There is conscious and explicit attention paid to the wellbeing of staff, pupils and their families. This is shown in the curriculum provision and all decision making in school. ● Staff understand that the school's special values-based ambience is created by a focus on being calm, peaceful, and purposeful. ● Staff have been given time to reflect on the ways that they will model the school's values. ● The individual is valued - all staff and pupils are shown care and respect. ● Staff are self-aware and conscious of the impact they have on others. ● Staff are authentic, give unconditional positive regard and empathy to all pupils and each other. ● Classrooms are enabling environments, where pupils and staff form positive relationships, enabling pupils to self-regulate their emotions and build self-esteem. ● Staff are conscious of the need to focus on mental health in all aspects of school life. ● The wellbeing of all stakeholders (staff, pupils, parents, Governors/Trustees) is acknowledged and enhanced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes of staff meetings ● Minutes of Governor meetings ● Records of CPD ● OFSTED Report ● Displays ● Interviews with staff, pupils, governors, and parents ● Staff, parent, and pupil questionnaires ● Values Policy ● Photographs ● Curriculum maps

Aspect 1 – Wellbeing

School's Comments

Wellbeing is a priority of the School and forms part of our School Vision, which lies at the heart of all that we do. Staff wellbeing is promoted in many ways and CPD ensures staff are valued and supported in their roles. Wellbeing is an item on every staff and ELT meeting, meetings start with 'what went well this week' and staff are encouraged to give each other a 'shout out' on the board in the staff room. All staff and their families are offered access to a counselling service to support them in areas including mental health, finance and housing. A member of staff has been trained as a mental health first aider. All staff are given a comprehensive Induction programme to welcome them to St Mary's and to help them to settle into their new roles. Staff live the Values and model these to children, families, colleagues and visitors.

St Mary's investment in wellbeing was demonstrated by the Healthy Schools Award in June 2021, recognising our work in promoting positive mental and physical health. An annual Health week focuses on these aspects of the school's work and provides a range of healthy activities to our children. We invest in a Fit for Sport coach and the children enjoy regularly taking part in Sports Tournaments with other local schools. Pupil voice is gathered and acted upon in many ways including learning walks, worship, subject reviews, Faith group, School council and surveys. Staff have received Growth Mindset training and this has now been incorporated into the curriculum, as well as being shared with parents. A positive behaviour policy and a focus on reflection (with spiritual corners in each classroom and a spiritual garden) promote an atmosphere of peace and calm across the school.

The School continue to invest in a part-time Family Support Worker who provides pastoral care to families and children. Staff are always available to listen to concerns raised by children and families; a wide range of parental workshops and drop-ins are provided for parents and practical support is offered in many forms, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Weekly inclusion meetings attended by the Head, Deputy, SENDCO and Family Support Worker focus the school's work in supporting children and families, including wellbeing, inclusion, SEND support, mental health, family support and attendance.

Assessor's Comments

Wellbeing is a huge focus at St Mary's. Parents, pupils and staff spoke proudly of the work the school does to promote wellbeing - within individual pupils, classes, families, all staff at all levels and the wider community. Christine Graham, Headteacher and her Deputy Headteacher Matt Wright both share high levels of commitment to the wellbeing of their whole school community.

On the gate in the morning, children are dropped off by parents who told me that they feel their children are safe and cared for at school. The day starts with children being offered breakfast through the 'Magic Breakfast' scheme so that children are set up for a positive start. Pupils told me about the ways that staff support their wellbeing, they feel safe and they know that any issues they have will be addressed by staff or that they can seek support from young leaders. Classrooms each have a worry box, children told me how they use these to share any worries they have and that staff will these are also available in other key areas around the school and on the school's website.

The children also shared the Spiritual Garden with me, explaining how they can go there at break and lunchtimes to be peaceful and reflect, in addition, the spiritual corners were celebrated by the Faith group who also told me about 'prayer boxes' which encourage children to record prayers of their own. Pupils also spoke of visiting the Therapeutic Garden at St Mary's church outside of school time. Although this is a community resource, the children know that it is a part of their community, were involved in its creation and visit regularly to clear the leaves. In classrooms, children are supported in their wellbeing through the use of 'Jigsaw' which provides a structured approach to teaching aspects of wellbeing such as mindfulness and relaxation techniques. Children find these strategies useful.

Values Primary School

Parents spoke at length about the wellbeing support the school offer to their children, they also talked about the worry boxes and that their children feel safe and secure at school. They also told me at length about the compassion shown by the school to families on an ongoing basis but particularly through the pandemic. The school were able to offer support and guidance to families on aspects such as housing, legal support, immigration and access to foodbanks.

Staff wellbeing is a huge priority of the school. Governors prioritise staff wellbeing by keeping the matter high on their agenda and resourcing the things which make a difference to staff. Workload has been reduced through a strategic curriculum design which works to promote retrieval and long term memory of key concepts for pupils and support staff to collaborate on planning together. The school have invested further in developing teacher wellbeing through deployment of a consultant to support subject leaders in developing their subject expertise and growing their confidence and sense of being valued. An employee assistant package offers staff access to support in a range of areas including face to face counselling for themselves and their family members. From speaking to staff, they feel supported, they feel their workload is important to school leaders but most of all, they feel valued and appreciated. Staff know that they are supported, they speak about the sense of 'family' in the school and how they are never made to feel that their personal issues, their sickness absence or their family difficulties are a 'problem' for the school. School leaders support the staff, allowing them to take the time needed before returning to the classroom.

In summary, there is a strong culture of wellbeing and care in the school which applies to all everyone within the school community and the wider community outside of school.

Aspect 2 – Compassionate Leadership

Values-based Leadership is compassionate leadership. Everybody in the school is involved in their different roles with leading and promoting a values-based approach. It is therefore evident in all areas of the school community. Adults are strong role models and encourage pupils to take on responsibility for themselves and others. Leaders empower and encourage others to develop their own potential. The school actively supports families. Compassionate values-based leadership informs all of the school's actions, provision and decision making; at times it is demanding – requiring a courageous and principled stance – but will always reap benefits for the individuals and the school as a whole. *The quality of Leadership is paramount because without it a values-based school does not develop. The headteacher/principal is key because he/she is the principle architect of the school's vision. We observe, that having the capacity to dream (use creative imagination) brings transformational positive energy (inspiration) into the formation of a VbE school - a prime characteristic of an altruistic leader. This, coupled with the seemingly endless capacity to access their own reservoir of uncontaminated self-energy, enables the leader(s) to remain stable and focussed in an educational context of incomparable complexity and challenge. It is through the commitment, drive, care and their ability to inspire others that the leader creates a sustainable school culture based on VbE, which has the active support of all members of staff, ensuring consistency of practice across all aspects of school life. Others will play a major part in the leadership of the school. However, we would argue that a VbE school encourages all members of the school, both adult and children, to be seen as leaders, taking personal responsibility for their thoughts and behaviour and sustaining an ethical vocabulary.*

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders and governors/trustees fully and actively support Values-based education. This is reflected in the school literature, including the policies, mission statement, prospectus, newsletters, and website. ● The leadership releases the creative dynamic of staff and pupils, creating a sustainable school culture based on values. There is no hierarchy of relationships, only of roles. There is no limit put on potential. ● Evidence (both qualitative and quantitative) is used to determine the impact that Values-based Education is having on learning, behaviour, and attendance in school. ● Staff and Pupils are encouraged to take on a variety of leadership roles. They have real responsibility in their roles and can talk purposefully about how they see their own leadership borne out in the school in their areas of influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interviews with staff, pupils, governors, and parents ● Policies ● Website ● Questionnaires from staff, pupils, and parents ● SDP. ● SEF ● Short case studies exemplifying the impact of compassionate leadership with eg LAC, staffing, support for families, SEN, etc

Aspect 2 – Compassionate Leadership

School's Comments

The potential of everyone in our School Community is promoted through the school vision and values, which lie at the heart of all that we do. Staff are developed and encouraged to build their career, both through promotion, support to engage in further training and through deepening their knowledge and skills within their role. Several of our Teaching Assistants have been encouraged and supported to train to become Teachers.

Everyone's ideas are valued at St Mary's and the process of renewing our school vision and values included meetings with all stakeholders, including children, parents, staff and governors. Staff contribute to the School Development plan each year and a Leadership away day enables leaders and governors to plan together strategically.

Children are all nurtured as leaders, including through the school council and children's faith group. Children in each class are given responsibilities. Year 6 are all invited to apply to become 'young leaders' and they support the life of the school by hearing younger children read, supporting in the lunch hall, being playground leaders, helping in the school office and setting up and leading worship.

Children's cultural capital is promoted in many ways, offering them a rich variety of experiences (see website news items and newsletters). A Summer School was run in 2021 to provide over 100 children each day with a rich curriculum of art, design, sewing, pottery, African drumming, poetry, sports and cookery. Children who require some additional support with managing their emotions and building relationships are invited to weekly 'sports stars' sessions and an art therapist works with individuals and small groups.

Children make good and very good progress academically and this has been identified by internal monitoring and external reviews. Attendance remains high and is above national averages each year. Behaviour and first aid incidents are carefully monitored and these have shown a significant reduction over time.

Assessor's Comments

Governors and senior leaders actively promote staff and pupil wellbeing and ensure that resources are available to prioritise these areas. Governors take a very active role in the school, working with the Faith group, going on visits with the children and being part of reading initiatives. Governors ensure that values are discussed regularly in governor meetings to ensure that values are at the forefront of their work. Governors model the values through their work and have been awarded a Good Governance Certificate from the Bishop. Values drive the schools' vision and mission statement the SEF and school development plan and are included in all of the school's key documents and policies.

This strong governance role modelling permeates all levels of leadership, from the Headteacher and Deputy to all class teachers – all staff model the values in their interactions with one another and with pupils. Children see this example and follow it in their leadership roles as Young Leaders. I was shown around the school by the Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy, both of whom are also Prefects. They told me how they support their younger peers and I watched one particular interaction between the deputy headteacher and a year 3 pupil who had come into school upset, Matt asked an older pupil in the corridor to take the younger one to have a chat about what was worrying her. I saw her again at lunchtime, happy and the issue resolved. Children see the compassion adults show to them and to each other and emulate this in their actions.

Compassion is strongly promoted through the incredible work the school are doing to build cultural capital through a focus on courageous advocacy. This approach invites classes to

select a good cause that they can advocate for – examples include campaigning for families with no recourse to public funds, supporting the homeless with essential items and eco-warriors. Children make a real difference to the lives of others through this approach and speak with great eloquence about the work they do. This work is not only enormously altruistic, it is having a significant impact on the way in which children think and express their views. In terms of cultural capital, these opportunities are providing the children with an ethical vocabulary and the ability to formulate and justify their views. In conjunction with the use of high-quality speaking frames, children have developed excellent oracy skills.

Parents told me that their children love school, they feel that the school's focus on values is a contributing factor to their love of school, along with the curriculum approach and wealth of experiences offered to their children. Children are offered opportunities to learn an instrument, visit the community, perform at Blackheath concert hall, to go sailing, learn to swim and to take part in the incredible work of the advocacy projects.

Aspect 3 – Behaviour and Relationships

Adults are excellent role models for values, and pupils are rewarded for their modelling of the Values. Behaviour and relationships are enhanced by a number of characteristics which include the quality of school displays; positively worded signage; cleanliness; the quality, organisation, and management of resources; the external environment; the calm working atmosphere, break time and catering arrangements; how staff are valued and supported as people; friendly and courteous behaviour of adults and children. The atmosphere reflects the school's culture and fully supports its curriculum.

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values-based Education underpins the school's behaviour and related policies, expectations, and practice. • Staff are all consistent role models for Values • Relationships are seen to be positive between all stakeholders • As a result, pupils across the school demonstrate consistently positive behaviours and relationships. • Values-based Education demonstrably informs the development of character, learning behaviours and emotional and mental health. • Pupils show a high degree of personal autonomy and can talk cogently about their feelings and emotions. • Parents/carers are encouraged to take an active part in the values-based approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with, or questionnaires from, staff, pupils, governors, and parents • Curriculum plans • Assembly plans/observations • Daily practice • OFSTED Report • Displays • Reward/award systems • Staff demeanour & the welcome to visitors

Aspect 3 – Behaviour and Relationships

School's Comments

The school has a positive behaviour policy and celebrating all children's achievements lies at the heart of this. Each week an 'achievement worship' celebrates the children's use of the school values to succeed personally and academically. Behaviour is carefully tracked and interventions put in place as required. A link governor meeting monitors behaviour and pupil voice is a part of this. Behaviour incidents and exclusions have shown a very significant decrease over the last few years.

Our values are the foundation for our daily worship, which is a strength of the school. A carefully planned programme of worship supports the children to reflect on and learn about each of our school values, with the Bible and links to other faiths providing inspiration.

Children are encouraged to recognise and celebrate when they identify their peers living the school values. Worry boxes are placed in each class, communal areas and also online via the school website and our Purple Mash online learning site.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has made our work in these areas more important than ever and an impact of the pandemic is that there remains a strong need for a continuing focus on developing children's ability to manage and talk about their emotions.

Assessor's Comments

Pupil behaviour at St Mary's is excellent. Children are ready to learn and have high levels of enthusiasm in lessons and staff work together to ensure that this enthusiasm is channelled into learning. Children are encouraged to develop their own opinions and to use their ethical, values-based vocabulary, along with an embedded practice of using talking frames to promote high quality oracy, to express these views. In values lessons, children shared ideas of how to bring greater peace to the world by being peacemakers in the day to day sense of solving minor disputes, through to how global peace could be achieved through peaceful protest. This was linked to the religious character of the school with regular reference to scripture from the Bible.

Parents told me that their child feels safe in school and that staff show them great respect, maintaining their confidentiality and supporting them with even the smallest of issues. Bullying is not an issue at St Mary's but parents know that children will have difficulties in their peer relationships from time to time and told me how staff work to resolve issues quickly and through a values based approach.

The school promotes pupil leadership very well, one of these leadership roles is the Faith group. The Faith group meet and work with school governors to ensure that pupil voice is strong in the school. I met with the Faith group and found the group to be impressively eloquent in explaining their thoughts, again, it was evident that the practice of using speaking frames as well as strategies such as the use of 'building on' gestures allow children to explain their thinking in a well-constructed and very respectful way. These strategies empower children with the spoken structures to respectfully disagree with someone or to build on to what has already been said. This leads to a very respectful discussion where children feel that their contributions are truly listened to, understood and valued.

Values Primary School

Children showed great respect and could talk with great confidence about how they show the values, reward the values, how they are recognised for showing values and how they share values with their family outside of school. The children in the faith group take a genuine role in leading the teaching of values through worship and prayer and associated activities. The children are proud of their involvement in the group and the leadership opportunities they have across the school through the work of this group. Through all of my conversations with this group the children showed huge humility for their achievements and demonstrated extremely high levels of respect for others.

Across the school - at lunchtime, on the tour of the school, in classes, in the faith group and in the playground, the children spoke with genuine affection about the adults in their school and exuded warmth towards them. Children emulate the model of compassion and care shown by adults towards children in their own behaviours towards one another. Relationships between pupils, between adults and pupils and adult to adult are all warm and positive. The atmosphere in the school is respectful, warm and full of values and love.

In the daily worship led by the Headteacher, pupils showed respect for one another in the way they listened to contributions during the session. Children participated in a variety of ways within the worship session and learned through connections to artefacts, well known figures and symbolism and through reading scripture from the Bible. The children sang together as part of worship and took part in a reflection and prayer at the end. The worship was full of respect and by the end the children had a secure grasp of the concept of being a peacemaker.

Aspect 4 – Teaching and Learning

*The main focus of VbE is on the selection, practice and living of an **ethical vocabulary**. The ethical vocabulary comprises a community chosen set of universal, positive human values such as respect, tolerance, resilience, courage and compassion. The selection of these words finds universal support from all the major world religions and non-religious groups such as the humanist society. These values words, when actively lived by people, become their character traits or virtues (values in action). We believe that they help children to develop ethical intelligence, the most important of all the intelligences to nurture, as it is through EI that human beings can come together to solve world problems. This is because the development of an explicit ethical vocabulary enhances and enriches communicative competence, which we maintain could lead to a new universal narrative, problem solving, common language, based on values. The entire curriculum is purposefully planned to bring opportunities to enhance pupils’ understanding of Values. Teaching and learning includes opportunities to develop Critical Thinking – through discussion and analysis using an ethical vocabulary.*

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding and use of an ethical vocabulary underpins learning. ● Pupils are given opportunities to explore ethical dilemmas, which help them to develop emotional strength and understanding the part played by values in real life contexts. ● Learning through Values-based Education is planned around key questions or concepts that deepen and broaden pupil knowledge and understanding. ● The school’s climate for learning is happy, calm, and purposeful; one that promotes quality teaching and learning. It also radiates joy! ● Values are embedded in every area of the curriculum. ● The school’s commitment to the principles of values-based Education is reflected in all areas of the school’s life. Values are reflected in the outdoor as well as indoor school environment. ● Values have been selected and curriculum time allocated for their consideration. ● School assemblies are used to teach about the school's values. ● Values Education is taught consistently across all classes and year groups with the focus on the formation of caring, civil, and well-educated people. ● Values are explicitly and implicitly taught and referenced across the curriculum, including PSHE and RSHE. ● Values-based Education fully supports all pupils identified with SEND. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interviews with, or questionnaires from, staff, pupils, governors, and parents ● Displays and signage ● Policies ● General climate of the school ● Curriculum plans ● Lesson observations ● Pupils’ work ● Witness statements from parents, visitors, leaders

Aspect 4 – Teaching and Learning

School's Comments

The award of the Inclusion Quality Mary 'Centre of Excellence' and annual reviews continue to recognise our work in this area. Termly pupil progress meetings identify any children requiring additional targeted support and this is carefully planned and monitored.

Our thematic curriculum is designed to reflect our local community and the children's backgrounds. The curriculum is regularly reviewed, taking pupil voice into account. Our curriculum is enriched through visits, trips and special events such as book week, science day, maths problem solving days, poetry workshops, African drumming, steel pans and health week. Children love these special events which help to make learning fun at St Mary's and offer the children rich experiences that they may not otherwise have, widening their horizons. The award of the Religious Education Quality Mark 'Gold' recognised our strength and depth in this area.

Values displays and plaques are prominent around the school, including outdoors.

Assessor's Comments

School leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum which ensures that pupils have the knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. The curriculum is structured to build cultural capital and, not only an ethical vocabulary, but an 'ethical capital' too. Through a structured approach to values teaching, courageous advocacy and a keen focus on oracy skills, children are able to express their views confidently and with the utmost respect. This will undoubtedly support children in having the confidence to take their learning further in the future.

Children use the language of values consistently whilst talking about their school, their behaviours, their activities and events and their learning. The courageous advocacy projects undertaken by the school provide outstanding opportunities for children to learn about important aspects of our world and how a values-based approach can make a big difference in the world.

In values lessons teachers provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to become responsible, respectful and active contributors to society. Pupils know how to discuss and debate issues and ideas in a considered way. In the values lessons I observed I was impressed by the children's use of language supported by the use of speaking frames, helping children to structure their spoken contributions. In Year 2 the children were learning to be peacemakers by helping two teaching assistants to resolve a dispute which had been 'acted out'. Children offered suggestions to support the two staff to help them to talk to one another about how they felt and to ultimately apologise and resolve the issue. In Year 6, the teacher again promoted oracy to a high standard in a debate over the statement 'All protests should be peaceful.' Children used speaking frames to support their points and build on or disagree with one another's arguments in a supremely respectful way.

Aspect 5 – Reflection

Reflection is the means through which we access our internal world of thoughts, emotions, and feelings, and regulate them, which helps us sustain mental health and increases the capacity for self-determination. We argue that this is a key skill for children to learn - the fourth "R" of education. Reflective practices encompass a spectrum of activities including thinking about your work; reflecting on our behaviour and the impact it has on other people; reflecting on a story and then maybe having an opportunity to discuss your thoughts with others and hear differing perspectives; mindfulness and meditative practices. The Inner Curriculum (Hawkes and Hawkes 2018) teaches us how to be aware and in control of our internal world of thoughts, feelings, and emotions, enabling us to respond appropriately to others without hurting them or damaging our own sense of self. Indeed, it supports the development of a strong and secure sense of self, which develops the disposition of self-leadership sustaining wellbeing.

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time is given for daily reflection in assemblies and classrooms. This is consistent throughout the school. • The school teaches reflection as a key approach to thinking and learning and through this, pupils develop the confidence to challenge, question and consider. • Staff understand the benefits of mindfulness activities in developing control over the limbic system. • Pupils are able to discuss the impact of reflection on themselves. • Staff understand that this 'Inner Curriculum' nurtures a secure sense of self, by enabling us to be aware and in harmonious control of our internal world of thoughts, feelings, sensations, and emotions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with, or questionnaires from, staff, pupils, governors, and parents • Curriculum plans • Assembly plans • Daily practice • Policies

Aspect 5 – Reflection

School's Comments

Peace and Reflection are promoted in many ways across our School Community. A spiritual garden was designed and planted with children and families, this provides a quiet space for calm and reflection that is open to all members of the school community. Each class has a dedicated spiritual corner. Children are encouraged to positively reflect on their behaviour and 'missed playtime' has been replaced with 'reflection time' which is a positive opportunity to reflect on how the school values can be used to support us in our learning and behaviour.

St Mary's annual Prayer Day and Easter Journey provide everyone in the school community with the opportunity to pray and develop their spirituality and reflection in the beautiful setting of St Mary's Church and grounds. These events are planned and run by our children and supported by the clergy. Prayer Day has a clear focus on our 6 school values as each activity is linked to 1 or 2 of our values.

Reflective worship provides staff and children with time and space to be at Peace. Daily Worship includes time for reflection. Wellbeing is promoted through meditation activities. Recognising the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, St Mary's have developed a recovery curriculum as children have returned to school, this has a focus on wellbeing and reflection. Staff have had Growth Mindset training and this is now a central part of our curriculum and shared with the children every day. Parents have also been offered growth mindset training. Our Destination Reader programme encourages children to reflect and share their opinions, building and challenging others positively.

Assessor's Comments

The children benefit from a keen focus on reflection in the school. They showed me their spiritual garden and told me how they go there to reflect and have some quiet time. Children spoke with great pride about their Prayer Day – I heard about this from my tour guides, pupils I spoke to at lunchtime and also from the Faith group who organise the whole event. Prayer day is organised by pupils for the whole school community including staff and governors. This provides a focused opportunity for reflection on one of the school's values, expressed through prayer and shared through colourful displays which adorn the hall. The children are incredibly proud of this aspect of their school, a pride shared by staff, governors and the wider community. Prayer day helps to further strengthen the links between the school and the church.

Daily worship includes an opportunity for reflection through prayer and thought. In the worship observed it was clear that children are very practiced in linking schools' values with the wider themes in the Bible and in formulating prayer.

Teachers develop mindful practice in classrooms, using resources and planning in the Jigsaw programme to focus the children on ideas such as breathing techniques for relaxation. These sessions are a routine part of the day and allow children to access reflective practice in a range of different ways. Children are calm and settled across the school and have excellent behaviours for learning. The playground is a happy place where children can relax with friends and take part in structured and supported activities.

Children reflect constructively and positively on their learning, one pupil told me that his strongest value is perseverance as he never gives up in his work. Perseverance is not one of the school's six values, however it is a clear aspect of the growth mindset work that the school has invested in to build resilience in their learners. This is just one of the many examples of growth mindset I observed whilst visiting St Mary's.

Aspect 6 – Values into Action

We argue passionately that a core objective of education should be to nurture self-energy, in the context of thinking about and applying positive values such as resilience, empathy, courage, altruism and justice. So, how do your young people turn their knowledge and understanding of values into good action – things that will help others and the world? We remember that good deeds, however small, are the finest things and should be acknowledged and celebrated. Equally, this is an opportunity for our passionate young people to contribute to school, local, national and global action, such as sustainability or charity works. No two schools will approach this in the same way, but in all cases they will be helping children to develop a mindset and character for their lives that looks to make a positive difference.

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school’s selected values underpin the culture, ethos, and work of the school. ● There is evidence of the school having an outward facing approach, taking their Values out into the community. ● Parents/carers are encouraged to take an active part in the values-based approach. ● Pupils have a high level of autonomy and are encouraged to use values intuitively to do good. ● All members of the school community are encouraged to develop self-leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interviews with/questionnaires from staff, pupils, governors, and parents ● Website ● Policies ● School Development Plan ● Self-Evaluation Form ● School Council notes ● Case study examples

Aspect 6 – Values into Action

School's Comments

St Mary's became only the third school in London to achieve the School of Sanctuary award. The award has been made in recognition of our work and ongoing commitment to the City of Sanctuary vision of being a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution.

Everyone in our school community is encouraged to learn that they have a voice and that they can make a difference to our school, local, national and global communities. Each class choose and develop a courageous advocacy project, supporting the homeless, asylum seekers, the local community, a link school in Ghana, local elderly residents and patients in Lewisham Hospital. Parents and children take part in campaigns, for example handing our local MP a road safety petition or parents giving Lewisham Council staff training on how to be more welcoming. The creation of a Community Hub has given our work a focus and a place to offer parents training and advice.

St Mary's is outward facing, looking to share what we do and to learn from others. The school hosted a vision, values and RE showcase day which was attended by leaders from the Southwark Diocese Board of Education and 20 senior leaders from across the Southwark Diocese.

Assessor's Comments

St Mary's is one of the finest examples of Values into Action that I have ever seen. The work the school are doing to take values out of the classroom, out of the school into the community and beyond the community into the wider world is humbling. Every single person I spoke to echoed this point – the parents on the gate, the parents I met in school, the parents who volunteer as reading champions, the pupils, the staff, the governors, even the plumbers who were signing in when I arrived - ALL of these members of the school community spoke of the work of the school in the community.

The evidence presented by the school was overwhelming enhanced further by the testimony and emotion shared by the staff team, governors and pupils as they spoke with pride of the projects undertaken to support the wider community. The courageous advocacy work that pupils pupils have undertaken has inspired their parents - a group of parents led training for the Local Authority housing team to train them in how to speak to members of the public in a more compassionate way. These examples demonstrate a values culture in the school which has permeated every aspect of the school very deeply.

Other values-based schools could learn from St Mary's as a beacon of excellence, in this strand in particular.

What would you identify as being your ‘stand out’ area of excellence in Values-based Education?

(Think here about what you would like your school to be known for and what you would be able and willing to share in terms of your practice with other schools, either in this country or across the world.) VbE can help you to share this great practice!

School’s Comments

- Reflection and Worship
- Community Projects – Values into Action
- Compassionate Leadership – Promoting Wellbeing across the School Community

Assessor’s Comments

I am in full agreement with the school’s evaluation of these strengths. The work the school are doing in these areas is exemplary, particularly the altruistic work being done through the courageous advocacy projects, demonstrating values into action. The children are offered genuine opportunities to make a real difference to the lives of others which enhances the work the school are doing to make a significant difference in the lives of the pupils.

St Mary’s curriculum extends well beyond the academic and provides children with a broad range of opportunity to learn in different ways and different contexts. The school’s work to enhance pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary and is to be applauded. Through a firm commitment to widening children’s horizons with music lessons and performance opportunities, St Mary’s provides a huge range of opportunities to empower pupils to develop their talents and interests.

AUDIT REPORT

Suggestions for Next Steps

- Further develop children's ethical vocabulary and their ability to use the Values to communicate and make positive choices both now and in their future learning journeys and life in the wider world.
- Continue to support staff to realise the benefits of mindfulness and reflection.

Audit Conclusion

St Mary's absolutely meets the criteria to be awarded with the quality mark for Values-based Education. The work the school are already doing in these 'next steps' areas is paying dividends and these further steps will take the school closer to the place the community wants it to be. Christine and Matt, together with Julia and the governing body have ensured that St Mary's is already a positive environment for pupils, a supportive place for parents, a caring workplace for staff, a centre of excellence in the community, an important part of the church and a contributor to the wider world. I think we will be hearing a lot more from St Mary's in the future and I very much hope that they will continue to spread the word about Values-based Education.

Values Primary School

The small print:

The Quality Mark acknowledges and celebrates an organisation's successful engagement with values-based principles. It is a valuable tool to communicate the organisation's status to students, staff, parents, governors and inspecting bodies. The certification is valid for a three-year period on the basis of the school's continued excellence in its values-based approach. During the certification period, where the quality of the organisation's values-based approach becomes materially compromised, we reserve the right to re-evaluate the school's approach to VbE and, where appropriate, withdraw the certification.