

## Appendix 1

### Documents Needed to Register Your School with the Government

You will need the 'Register an Independent School' Application form from the government website.<sup>1</sup> Here you will state that you wish to be designated as a Christian school, which gives you the right to employ only Christian teachers.

You will then need to prepare the following documents demonstrating how you will meet the independent school standards found on the government website.<sup>2</sup>

Document	Brief description
Premises Plan	Maps, diagrams, and explanations covering the Independent Schools Standards for premises e.g. demonstrating suitable changing room facilities
Curriculum Plans and Policy	Subject or age based high level plans and vision, referencing Christian ethos and your approach to Christian Education that requires Christian teachers
Schemes of Work	Medium level plans, term by term, for all subjects, from which lesson plans could be derived by teachers for every year group you want to be registered to receive
Pupil Assessment Procedures	Procedures for monitoring and testing to assess progress of pupils; when you will apply standards and which examinations you would aim towards
Anti-bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy & Behaviour Policy	Five fundamental policies needed for registration, referencing all aspects of the Independent School Standards which should include the Christian values underpinning your approaches
Complaints Procedure	The four-stage process and who will handle complaints at each stage
Covering Letter	Also called 'Independent School Statement' where you state some brief history, that you wish to be independent, why and when you wish to open
Proprietor details form	Information, including photographs and credentials of relevant people who will function as the proprietor

Detailed guidance, including on applying for religious designation, is also provided on the government website.<sup>3</sup>

Copies of such documents from other schools who have completed these processes can be obtained by permission of Headteachers, through our developing networks. Many examples are already freely available online.

<sup>1</sup> Go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-an-independent-school-application-form>

<sup>2</sup> This can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-school-registration>

<sup>3</sup> See the Department for Education guide:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/865049/BRANDED\\_independent\\_school\\_registration\\_guidance\\_21\\_August\\_2019Ms.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/865049/BRANDED_independent_school_registration_guidance_21_August_2019Ms.pdf)

## **Appendix 2**

### Important information on 'Religious Ethos' and 'Religious Character'

#### Schools with a religious ethos (affecting admissions)

The application form for registration will ask whether or not the school has a religious ethos, and details of any religious ethos declared will be recorded on GIAS. **Independent schools registered as having a religious ethos are able to admit pupils and provide pupils with education and access to other aspects of school life on religious grounds.** Such discrimination is generally prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, but a specific exemption exists for independent schools registered as having a religious ethos.

#### Schools designated by order as having a 'religious character' (affecting admissions, recruitment and dismissal)

In addition, the Religious Character of Schools (Designation Procedure) (Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended, allow the Secretary of State to make an order designating an independent school as having a religious character where the requirements set out in the regulations are met.

Independent schools designated as having a religious character can:

- discriminate on the basis of religion in admitting pupils and provide, to pupils, education and access to other aspects of school life on religious grounds;
- give preference in connection with the appointment, promotion and remuneration of teachers on religious grounds;
- take into account conduct incompatible with the precepts or tenets of the religion in appointing or terminating the employment of teachers.

The Equality Act 2010 is not breached by doing anything listed above as permitted as a result of religious designation. However, these freedoms which are granted in relation to schools which have a religious designation (and the ones listed above for independent schools registered as having a religious ethos) do not constitute a discriminatory free for all. They only relate to discrimination on religious grounds, and they do not permit such schools to discriminate (in doing the things in question) on grounds of gender, race, sexuality, and so on. **The proprietor of a registered independent school, or a proprietor planning to open an independent school, can apply for designation of the school as a school with a religious character. Full details and an application form will be sent on request or at the time of registration.** A school can also seek designation at any time after opening.

## **Appendix 3**

### Approaches to Christian Education

Which approach to Christian education is the 'right one'? Off the shelf plans, principles to follow, or prayerfully ad hoc teaching? Charlotte Mason, Doug Wilson, David Smith or David Freeman? National Curriculum, online curriculum, character curriculum? Low fee, high fee, low salary, high salary, small buildings or big buildings? Primary school, Middle School, Secondary school or Sixth form...?

#### Comment on Approaches

There is no one-size-fits-all model. Each form of Christian Education has both strengths and weaknesses, and any honest advocate of a model will recognise this, no matter how enthusiastic they are for what they have become committed to. Those that emphasise curriculum can miss the importance of relationship in character development. Those that emphasise relationship can miss the importance of the power of the messages that flow through curriculum. Those that use 'off the shelf' plans, can lose out on the prayer processes that shape the teacher in the planning. Those that rely on their own prayerful planning, can lose out on the wisdom written down and honed over years. There are dangers for those who adopt National Curriculum, and the secular messages conveyed through what is include or omitted. There are also dangers for those who adopt Christian Curriculum, that does not afford teachers and pupils the opportunity to expose the narratives pervading culture. The approach of the teachers you develop, and indeed re-train, is as important as the quality of the content they are asked to deliver. The design of your approach must emphasise Christian character training as much as, if not more than, academic excellence.

As many potential teachers will have been trained in a state system, with its assumptions and expectations, teacher training at the start and throughout will be extremely important in order to maintain the Christian distinctiveness of your vision. Whichever forms you are led to explore, once you have become convinced of a course, consider carefully how you might mitigate against the weaknesses of your chosen model.

#### Models and Approaches

Below you will find a brief alphabetical list of some models being adopted:

**Accelerated Christian Education:** A self-instructional curriculum package, under teacher guidance, that integrates Bible truths and character values. Biblical principles and concepts are interwoven into the programme, with science taught from the Biblical literalist perspective of creation. They have their own accreditation system.

**Accommodated National Curriculum:** The curriculum studied is broadly identical to that of the state to achieve state qualifications, however opportunities are taken to include Christian worldview content, or additional subjects such as Biblical studies are added to complement the teaching. This is a common approach in KS4.

**Catechistic Education:** Educating the foundational doctrines of Christianity through an agreed question and answer approach. This is often used to emphasise the key teachings for children, through memorisation. It is a systematic approach, used in many Christian traditions. It is usually a discrete aspect of Christian learning.

**Character Approach:** Aspects of the character qualities of God are planned to be taught throughout the curriculum, especially through topics. Through these the character of the child is also addressed, and the application of these traits in the purposes and actions which could ultimately result from any curriculum learning.

**Charlotte Mason:** British educator and reformer, who built her principles from Biblical ideas. *"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life"*. It emphasises reading high quality books and the natural world. The model is used extensively by Christian home educators and with the primary age groups.

**Classical Christian Education:** An approach to learning which emphasises Biblical teachings and a classical Greek model known as the Trivium (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and has become an educational movement. Classical works are understood, critical thinking skills developed with an integration of a Christian worldview.

**Heart-concept Curriculum:** Teachers plan each unit with the integration of Christian heart concepts. This is mapped across year groups so that key Christian concepts are integrated and reinforced through the teaching of curriculum subjects during the child's progress through the school. This often works well with infant and primary topic teaching.

**Hybrid Models:** Some groups developing from primary home education develop collaborative teaching approaches which do not reach the thresholds needed to register a school, but are able to maximise parental engagement and the sharing of curriculum skills. This may become a good feeder for a secondary school with high parental connection.

**Metanarrative Approach:** The Bible story of creation, fall, redemption and restoration is integrated as part of the key concepts taught in any unit of teaching, and progressively over time in age-appropriate ways. Content speaks of what God has made, man's fallenness, how redemption can come through Christ's people now and in the future.

**Online Christian Schools:** Several are becoming available. Programs are delivered through online teaching by Christian teachers with a pre-designed Christian curriculum. Children can be part of an online class community or be supported more in their own home education programs. Especially helpful to mobile missionary families.

**Parent-Focused Approach:** Christian parents are an integral part of the running of the school community, supporting the children's teaching. This approach embodies the Hebrew expectation that parents are responsible to God for their children's education, through high levels of required involvement and volunteering during the school week.

**Prayer-Focused Approach:** This approach is focused on daily following the leading of the Spirit, through prayer and the Bible. It is very flexible, as it draws on the questions and interests naturally flowing from the children, which are then supported by the teacher. It is noted for high degrees of motivation and retention in primary ages.

**'What-if' Approach:** This emphasises the methods and practices of the teacher. It is based on the premise that a Christian understanding of life makes a difference to everything which happens in the classroom. It focuses on what is embodied by the teacher, giving time to analysing what is best to be given significance in any teaching.

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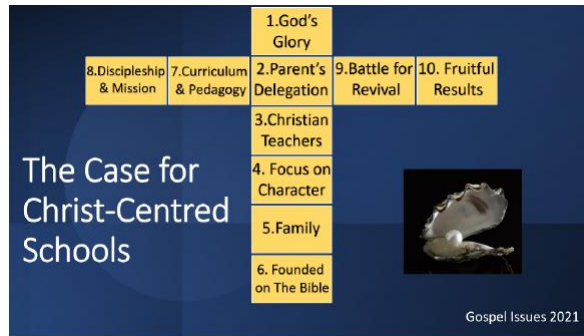
Contact us should you wish to know of locations or groups which have been inspired by any of these approaches.

As you consider these very brief definitions, consider what you might expect to be the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches as you pray through the vision the Lord is giving you.

## Appendix 4:

### Transcript The Ten Key Elements of a Christ-centred School: A Gospel Issues Talk for Christian Concern

Video link can found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ksoVPY7wxQ>



#### Introduction

Right now many Christian parents are seeing the damaging Relationships and Sex Education which their children are being given, and are seeing the secularising, sexualising culture predominate in their children's peer groups and in the teaching coming through their schools. And parents who believe their children might be protected in **so-called** 'Christian' schools, are discovering that Jesus Christ is no longer **at the centre** of the vision or ethos of many of these schools. Now I have colleagues in state schools who are doing incredible work in the state system as many of you are, but...

I use the term **Christ-centred**, so that we are in no doubt, about the distinctive kind of schools which are possible for our children.

Schools centred on Christ. Their vision and mission **focussed on Christ**. Such as in the way described in Colossians, which we will use as a lens to look at what a Christ-centred educated can be like.

Paul in Colossians 1 says this in praying for the church, praying for their growth in knowledge & wisdom (educational aims), and he is speaking **powerfully of Christ**. Let's go now to the scriptures!

v9-10 "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with **the knowledge** of his will, through **all spiritual wisdom and understanding (educational aims)**. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord, and may please him in every way, bearing fruit in every good work, **growing in the knowledge** of God.."

We are praying that the knowledge and wisdom of CHRIST will grow in us through being at this academy, and we pray this for our children. Why? Because Jesus Christ...the son...

1v15-20 "15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things

were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; **all things** have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before **all things**, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And **he is the head** of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that **in everything** he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to **reconcile to himself all things**, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”

There is no classroom subject, no area of work, no learning, no relationship that should not be centred on Jesus Christ. And Paul’s goal, and our goal in these two sessions...?

2v2-3 “<sup>2</sup> My goal is that they may **be encouraged** in heart and united in love, so **that they** may have the **full riches of complete understanding**, in order that they may know the mystery of God, **namely, Christ**, <sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden **all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**.”

I want you to be encouraged into Christ, and into a rich understanding of how children can be learning from and about Christ, to therefore find “*all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*”. This is a big view of a Christ centred family, a Christ-centred education, and a Christ-centred school.

When I was 7, I was filled with the Spirit of Christ. I asked in our Saturday kid’s workshop, run by the church, if I could be filled with the spirit to help me follow Jesus. The teachers there were committed to pray for and to invite children, to come to Jesus. And so, as I was prayed for, I can still remember it now, I was filled with a song and a prayer in a language I had not learned, but I knew I was praising God, And Christ’s Holy Spirit had been given to me, to fill me.

But just after this, when I then went into school, and my Y3 state school teacher was enforcing on us the writing of stories about witches and occultic things at Halloween, I didn’t want to do it. It felt all wrong. This teacher really and increasingly didn’t like me (for some reason-‘smell of death’), and clearly she came from a different worldview background. I suffered in that classroom. In that particular Halloween situation I actually wrote a story about a witch whose spells all went wrong, and who ended up walking past a church, heard the beautiful singing and went in and gave her life to Jesus Christ...

A little bit boundary pushing-but God gave me the wisdom by his Holy Spirit which had filled me in my Saturday school. Imagine if I had been encouraged at school, 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, into my growing relationship with God and his word. Not subtly being discouraged away from Christian faith or discriminated against because of it.

Imagine if I was sensitively, regularly being invited through prayer and in worship, as a child, to follow Jesus Christ, and if I was learning about the great truths of the Bible through every year of my education; that God was my heavenly Father at school. What foundations of faith could that lay?

I feel in this talk, it’s a bit like I’m trying to show you a treasure, a pearl of great price. That you might see its worth and maybe make radical decisions because of it. And so, I want to explain 10 things about a Christ-centred school to you, so to help you discern, and to help

you become more, **full of the riches of complete understanding**. I believe the church of Jesus Christ needs to understand and imagine what is possible, and have revealed the results of a Christ-centred education. The fruit produced from the root.

So, up front, here are the 10! A Christ-centred school education:

1. Focusses on **God's glory**
2. Recognises the primary position of **parents**
3. Only has **Christian Teachers** and Leaders
4. Grows **character** as much as academic gifting
5. Is a **Smaller family** not factory-like institution
6. Is founded in the teachings of **the bible**
- 12 christianconcern.com
7. Has a **Christ-centred approach** to curriculum and pedagogy
8. Understands a child's relationship to **discipleship and mission**
9. Is a **battle for revival** worth fighting for
10. Has **fruitful results**

### **1 Focusses on God's Glory**

A Christ-centred school, always implicitly, and often explicitly is speaking of God, and honouring and **glorifying Him**.

Not glorifying children through a 'child-centred' approach, or glorifying the infallible teachers, or the school ethos. And not glorifying an unquestioning religious obedience to rules, and certainly not glorifying academic results. But glorifying, giving glory and honour to Jesus Christ, who makes all the good, beautiful, exciting, outcomes possible by his grace.

Now, if you look at the names of Christ-centred schools, you will often see 'The King's School', which speaks of 'whose' school this is, and who it is for, and that He is rightful king. Education is always for a kingdom; and for citizenship and glorification of that kingdom.

'Trinity' school is a common name- the name itself teaching about who God is, and glorifying him.

'Emmanuel' school is common, it is God who is with us. And with us and our children here in this school.

You can very quickly see and smell what is glorified in a school environment when you go in and visit. The website, the displays, the messages/communications. The Stonewall champion mark, the glorifying of GCSE results, the vision statement that glorifies 'learning' and 'achievement' as the Educational saviour of mankind. Which it can never be.

Imagine a school where children worship and glorify God together with the staff, every day. Where the displays and the teaching are seeking to glorify Jesus Christ, always implicitly, often explicitly through the content and the methods. Where the school isn't there for the staff, its not there for the parents, and it's not there for the children- but the school is there for God.

I used to love going into The King's School Witney, and walking past the art installation by the car park near the entrance. Every child, parent and teacher, walking around and under and

through all the precious names given to God in scripture, inscribed in large bold letters, in bright colours. “*So that in everything He might have the supremacy*”. Glorifying God. A **Christ-centred** School.

Number 2 A Christ-Centred School...

## **2) ...Recognises the primary position of Parents**

There are two people who have been given a unique gifting, anointing, understanding, environment (home), genetic link, and a unique amount of time, to train and disciple every human being. This is how God designed it. Those two people are the biological parents. Mum and Dad.

**God’s grace does break into multiple situations where the fallen circumstances of this world mean this is not possible, and many of you here will personally know that.** But this does not negate the responsibility and the authority which God will hold us accountable for as parents, for what we have done, with the children, His children, which he gives us to steward. A Christ-centred school recognises this, and supports parents in this challenging task.

What are the implications of these two verses:

Proverbs 1 v 8-9: *Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction, and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.*

*They are a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.*

Ephesians 6v4: *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training : and instruction of the Lord.*

Christ-centred education commanded to come from parents. When we stand accountable for what God gave to us, who will he ask about our children?

No school, can or should aim to take this primary delegated role away from parents. It is an overstep of authority. And schools and teachers in Christ-centred schools, recognise they only have **delegated** authority **delegated from** the parents. The best way to disciple, train, and lead children to Jesus Christ, is by supporting the parents as they take their children to Jesus Christ.

We have a great example of this in the Gospels...

Matthew 19 v 13 “*One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. But Jesus (indignant) said, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.”*

How cross he was. How happy he is when we work together, (disciples, leaders, parents) together to bring children to Jesus.

Imagine teachers praying together with parents at parent’s evenings. And these schools will often seek to support parents through giving parenting training, and also providing opportunities to serve and connect within the school community. Many of the schools rely on



and welcome parents volunteering during the school day, and this builds a relational community, where the children then see the school is not some boxed of Christian activity I'm sent to, but something my family is committed to because they are here too. As we all seek to follow Jesus Christ, parent and child alike as part of the school community.

So often schools hold parents at arms-length, and keep them out as much as possible. *"Leave it to us the professionals. We know what's best for your children."*

But you love your children, like no-one else. The state cannot love your child. People can. And who are the best people? The genetic and spiritual links you have with your children, are **designed** so you as a parent are the best to be shaping your children so they will flourish, and Christ-centred schools understand this and work with you.

One of my greatest privileges has been praying with parents, together with their teenagers, when things have gone wrong. I remember welcoming the presence of Jesus to a repentant and emotional teenage girl with her mother, or praising God together with parents for incredible results or for healing.

This leads on to number 3... A Christ-centred school

3) Only has **Christian Teachers** and Leaders

Teaching is a relational process. Often, when you were at school, you grew to like a specific subject because you grew to like the teacher, and you felt they liked you. Relationship. And the opposite is true. Did the angry or cruel RE or Maths teacher put you off the subject? You felt they didn't like you and maybe the subject didn't like you. Doesn't make sense. This is because teaching is a relational process.

And through this relationship, of course knowledge is not the only thing which is or is not passed on. Attitudes are passed on. Faith is passed on; or unbelief. How your teacher acts is a model to the students, who take on these attitudes.

If teachers are examples of Christians seeking to follow God, prayerful, having the Bible central to their lives, seeking to reach out with God's love, telling stories of their own adventures of faith- guess what? This gets passed on to the children. As would cynicism, or atheism, or transgenderism, from teachers who hold these attitudes.

Christ-centred schools, have a genuine occupational requirement, a legal discriminatory GOR, that **their teachers are practicing Christians**. I don't think you can say your school is Christ-centred if the teachers are not Christ-centred.

The Christian leadership will pray together through the processes of recruitment and talk to church leaders, in getting references. These schools salaries are often much less than their equivalent state or independent schools, as they seek to keep the fees for parents as low as possible, so the teachers are sacrificial faith-filled missionaries really.

And God sovereignly and miraculously moves these teachers into position, providing for them and for **his** Christ-centred schools. I remember once being desperate for a Christian teacher who would be able to teach Secondary History and English. "Where am I going to get this Lord? It's your school, come on!" No-one suitable was applying.

Then out of the blue, from a committed Christian teacher, I had a CV and letter sent through from Puerto- Rico! Dear sir... lovely letter... I am secondary trained, and my subjects are... and I'm moving back to the UK. Perfect miraculous provision.

Even more last minute was when God solved a Secondary Physics gap. Physics teachers are hard to find! End of the summer, no one. And then one of the newer parents contacts me saying... "I am actually secondary trained as a Physics teacher and God is speaking to me". Actually it turned out they were a Doctor of Physics, who had even taught at Harvard. And when working at the school she loved praying for and with the children.

These special teachers, provided by God, are praying for the children together in staff meetings, asking the Lord how he wants to reveal himself, **through their lessons**, and demonstrating Christ's love to the whole school community.

Christ-centred schools are looking for those with a heart of spiritual Mums and Dads, to complement and support the parents. And these schools maintain a broad governing body who also prayerfully centre themselves around Christ.

The head is always seen as a key spiritual leader within these schools, and yet recognising Col 1:17 "*He is before **all things**, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>And **he is the head**"* .

The Christian headteacher or principal, recognises their delegated authority and responsibility under Jesus-Christ, the head. And what are these Christian teachers focussed on? Number 4

Well the Christ-centred school...

4) Grows **character** as much as academic gifting

What is the use of getting an A\* in Maths and using it as a finance officer to swindle people?

The morals that come from wanting to please Jesus Christ, flow into the teaching. This character development shapes the kind of people, Christ-centred schools are leading children to become. Are you a unique creation with a unique character?

Every child is understood as a unique creation, a unique personality, not a random accident of DNA and chance. Or an autonomous self, self determining all our traits. But designed with giftings, and the character that grows will determine how much their gifting will be used to glorify God.

These schools reward character development, as much as academic progress. When behaviour issues arise, they are seen as **opportunities** for training of character. Take forgiveness for example...

Christ-centred schools see disobedience or unkindness as sin, something which breaks relationship. A result of our fallenness, and in all of us. So a quick 'sorry' is normally not enough, but doing what is necessary to rebuild the relationship and trust. And this is as much to be trained even in any victim of poor behaviour. The foundation of our reconciliation is forgiveness; Christ's forgiveness.

Colossians 1 v19-20 "*For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup>and through*

*him to **reconcile to himself all things**, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross”*

True reconciliation is found with the Holy Spirit helping children, and young people, to express and mean forgiveness. **This** kind of character training is what a Christ-centred schools are aiming at. It is not just looking for unthinking, blind, rule following.

You know often the naughty ones are the boundary pushers, who have a propensity to not follow the rules, and they are the next generation of leaders and pioneers, who need to be rightly encouraged in this boundary pushing, and encouraged into submitting their character gifting and weakness to Jesus Christ.

And In doing this children are directed into wisdom, a key theme of the scriptures and of Christ-centred schools. Of course, academic development is important. It is a school after all! But learning and achievement are not worshipped and glorified. And what is found is the children in these schools far exceed the GCSE results of their peers in state schools. God’s favour, and the smaller classes makes a big difference!

Now, I in no way want you to get the idea that schools like these will be perfect. They can’t be, they are made up of people. But this is what the Christ-centred school is aspiring towards, in bringing Glory to God as they work with parents. They are seeking to be an extension of the nurturing Christian environment **of the home** and hopefully of the church; equally not perfect!

But all relying on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of Father God and relying on the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. So we come to Number 5, half way, which I began to allude to:

A Christ-centred school ...

### **5) Is a Smaller family not factory-like institution**

Jesus focussed on 12. He did this for a reason. Yes he taught the crowds! But he disciplined 12. When you cram in huge numbers, for cost reasons, in big buildings, you create an institution.

What is an institution? A place where you send people to have something done to them. Large schools easily become education factories. The less like the home they are the more alien the environments for children.

When in normal life are you crammed together with 30 or more people 6 hours a day, where all of you are born within 12 months of each other? Is a building full of 1000+ teenagers, moving from different teacher to different teacher every hour, really what God had in mind for his children to be doing with most of their time? ...

The Christian **home educators** I know, understand this well, and when asked, “*what about socialisation?*”, are rightly quick to highlight the far more ‘normal’ social environments with a mix of ages that their children are regularly in.

Rarely do their teenagers become the, non-communicative with adults, peer-obsessed, types. And in the small Christ-centred schools, which are often “all through” from primary to secondary, a family environment of Mums and Dads, with older and younger sisters and brothers is created. A family not an institution.

Do we want children to come out from GCSE factories, which moulds and monitors children on the basis of statistics on spreadsheets. League tables, improvement measures, Ofsted and government targets often **pressure** teachers and heads in schools down a path that leads to stress and misery for all.

I personally know the pressures, and the great teachers seeking to stand against that. We are seeing the results of these workhouses on our children's health as a nation.

The smaller environment means every child is known. No-one is missed. Someone will pick up quickly if you are anxious or off colour. And teachers actually have time to talk to you, to get to know you. To pray with you.

Jesus Christ said, when you pray say 'Our Father'. A Christ-centred school is a family under a Father, where everyone is known.

Number 6

A Christ-centred school...

### **6) Is aligned to the teachings of the Bible**

In America, they had an issue with counterfeit bank notes. They were being mass produced, from different sources, and becoming very difficult for bank tellers to spot. What they found was, they needed some experts who knew precisely and exactly where the errors were, and the imperfections, but they couldn't give all the expert training about all the potential flaws to all their bank tellers, and when they did try to, getting them to focus on and spot the flaws, they still missed many.

What they discovered though was this... that if they got the bank workers to study a real note, the genuine notes, with all the true markings and colours, these tellers could immediately see and sense where a note was not right (*hold imaginary note 'na doesn't look right'*)- even if they could not identify the exact error.

A bit like when you get to know twins well, and you can just tell which one is which when looking at them, without knowing the precise differences.

The traditional teachings of the church from Scripture are under threat. The understanding of the whole biblical narrative, of creation, fall, redemption through Jesus Christ and fulfilment, is not understood well by Christians.

Oh to have a school where this is explicitly taught to our children, and not just in a short RE lesson, but throughout the curriculum. Oh to have a school where verses of scripture are learnt in memory verses, and where songs are used to teach a biblical worldview. Where scripture is declaring the truth about Jesus Christ from the displays. Where the practices and policies are shaped by what **the bible says** about safeguarding, mental health, handling grievances, or teaching Geography. Where biblical role models are carefully studied.

So children see and experience the genuine biblical faith and teaching.

In Christ-centred schools, they take time to look at the bible, the original note if you like. And children can then quickly see, and smell, the counterfeits on offer by the world, if they have been studying and experiencing genuine life and light with flows from the person who is the

Word of God. Who is known through the bible. Which leads into Number 7. A Christ-centred school:

7) Has a **Christ-centred approach** to curriculum and pedagogy

Curriculum is a word meaning 'the course', as in a course, a route which was run by an athlete or a horse.

Pedagogy means the understanding of **how** content is taught by teachers, the methods. In a Christ-centred school, **alongside** the biblical and spiritual **content**, more regular curriculum will be taught, so children can complete the course. Children will still learn to spell, or do GCSE Science.

But the starting points, the understanding of the subjects value and purpose, stems from an understanding of God. Remember Col 1 v 16:

**"all things** have been created through him **and for him**. <sup>17</sup>He is before **all things**, and in him all things hold together".

This is true for every subject.

For **the treasures** of wisdom and knowledge to be known, Jesus Christ has to be at the centre. I hope this is coming through! And the way, the pedagogy, the how, which is both in the attitude and the process that the teacher takes, can also be focussed around Christ, His how's, coming from a Christian worldview. We have time to look at one example:

Art-

God is an artist. Its part of who he is. Look at creation. Colour, line, the skills to be artistic all given by God. Christ is described as being intimately involved in creation. As we read, *"All things have been created through him and for him"*. He's **creative**. And God says, let us make man (you and me) in our image. Some artwork!

And in human beings, the creator, because he is a creator by nature, **gives us all creativity**. We can use and develop this creativity to glorify him, and to point out fallenness in creation through art, and to stir worship, to practice for the New Heavens and the New Earth, where our creativity will be unconstrained by any fallenness. Wow! Imagine that...

Now, I am colour-blind. I can do stick men- well done me. My teacher when I was 8, embarrassed me in front of the whole class (this is the pedagogy), saying "You draw like a 2 year old", with my attempt at a daffodil with pastels.

Now, I wasn't likely to be the next Picasso, Christ had placed my giftings elsewhere, but imagine learning art in a school, where my artwork is set in the context of the creator, the creation, the redemption and the future new heavens and new earth. And taught by an art teacher who loved me, and knew there was creativity sown by God in me. Can you see that the how and the what of art is changed from this Christ centred worldview perspective.

Christ-centred schools think through their curriculum content and pedagogy. And subjects are not disjointed bits of learning, unrelated to each other. But are brought together, because Christ is at the centre.

In this way all the treasures of the interacting knowledge and understanding which leads **to wisdom** when submitted to Christ, **all these treasures** can enrich the one studying, so they might glorify God. A

Christ-centred school could say, as Paul did “My goal is that they (the children) may **be encouraged** in heart and united in love, so **that they** may have the **full riches of complete understanding**, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, <sup>3</sup>in whom are hidden **all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**”

There are a range of approaches that schools use which you can hear about if you come to our conference. None are perfect schools with perfect approaches, just as none of our churches are perfect. But the aspiration is for a Christ-centred education to be provided through the school and for the **curriculum content and pedagogy** to support this.

Number 8. A Christ-centred school...

8) Understands a child’s relationship to **discipleship and mission**

Often one of the objections people raise to having a Christ-centred school like this, is that our children should be trained for mission by the family by being in the state school system. I don’t deny that this is sometimes the call that God brings to families, and perhaps even seems to be the only choice available to many. There is God’s grace for all sorts of situations.

However, we must understand that young children are sponges. They are being disciplined and shaped by those who spend the most time with them. Children trust those that the parents hand them over to, because the parents clearly trust them. *“And so, it seems, do all my friends parents!”*

As we have said education is a relational process, and the culture, the attitudes and beliefs will be passed on especially to young children. Its discipleship. Think of an impressionable or vulnerable teenagers in the valley of decision that you know.

Who they live with and learn with matters deeply. Christ-centred schools also have naughty children, and rebellious teenagers. There is no ‘Holy Ghetto’ there.

The skills and challenges of life that develop the skills needed for mission, are there in these schools. But the school environment is filled with those praying for the children, so that they might have every chance to become followers of Jesus Christ. And there is a positive peer pressure, due to the majority of Christian families....

Remember 50% of our children aren’t being disciplined into following Christ. Would you send your child to an Islamic school, 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, and expect them not to be shaped by that? What do we believe about a secular education system? That it is neutral?

There are many ways to be involved in the local community as a Christian family - the school gate is only one of those places. And influence into state schools by Christians can take many creative forms.

Children who will become the best cultural missionaries, with the best foundations to be the servant leaders for the future revival, will be those who have strong foundations laid by parents and teachers.

Gardeners understand that the greenhouse, a place where plants roots can become strong, protected from the environmental conditions, greenhouses are needed for many plants to flourish and become fruitful. Do our children need a greenhouse?

Christ-centred schools do all sorts of activities, where they engage with the community. They will train them for mission. Mission into the workplaces they will go into, as they learn to understand that work is good, and that no subject or work is outside of Christ's reign.

And also through service projects, carol singing in Old people's homes, or mission trips abroad. At The King's School Witney where I was Principal, over a week we would take all the secondary school to work with a charity called The Besom, where we did various DIY SOS type service projects, for struggling families and people in desperate situations in the local area. Clearing gardens, painting rooms, blessing disabled people, often stopping people from being evicted. Part of our following Christ, not just being nice.

And of course Christ-centred schools are places where the gospel is explained and understood, and children and young people learn how to explain it and effectively discuss and communicate the truth claims of Jesus Christ in today's culture.

Number 9... Christ-centred schools

9) Is a **battle** worth fighting for

Because our children are so important for the passing on of the Christian faith, there is a spiritual, educational, theological, financial battle at play.

I believe Christ-centred home education and Christ-centred schools up and down this nation are part of the seedbed of revival. Young men and women being trained to become the Christian servant leaders of the next generation - missionaries into our post-Christian culture here, and all over the world, especially to unreached people groups, in which they will then start schools as well as plant churches.

Christ-centred schools have been at the forefront of a battle. The church has often not understood, but there is an awakening. Is there a call on your church, your community, a call to you, to be someone who engages in this battle for something so precious and powerful. A Christ-centred school?

It is a battle worth fighting for, because our children are worth fighting for.

And finally number 10... A Christ-centred school

10) Has **fruitful** results.

Wonderful fruit from these greenhouses!

“And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord, and may please him in every way, **bearing fruit in every good work**”

The research on both Christian home education and recently the Christian School's Trust schools show that 80-90% of the children who have had a Christ-centred education, remain as those who hold Jesus-Christ as their personal saviour, and into their 30s and 40s still hold to traditional biblical beliefs on issues such as relationships, creation, salvation. Not the 50% drop off because of the post-Christian culture taking hold in the minds of the children of Christian parents.

The academic results are astounding, especially as shown through GCSE results. These schools are normally non-selective on academic ability, yet in results are on a par with the local independent schools that are often selective. The academic results for pupils with special educational needs are also incredible...

There is a pandemic at the moment. It is affecting our children. It is a pandemic of mental health issues. It is a fruit. Christians rightly believe that there is a strong link between spiritual wellbeing and mental health.

The Princes Trust completed thorough research on 18-25 year olds across the UK in 2018. At the same time detailed research findings on past pupils from what are called 'The New Independent Christian Schools', from the similar age range, was coming through. On the key beliefs that affect mental health the conclusions could not have been clearer.

The main example of this was that of the UK wide survey of thousands of 18-25 year olds, 27% *disagreed* with the statement 'Life has a sense of purpose'. Of the past pupils of independent Christ-centred Schools 98% stated they felt life did have a purpose

Even more starkly, 18% in the Princes Trust survey *disagreed* with the statement 'Life is worth living' (nearly 1 in 5 think life isn't worth living), whereas 99% of the past pupils of Christ-centred schools felt life **was**.

The past pupils were 18 times less likely to think life was not worth living. Despair, self-harm and suicide are natural end points to these negative beliefs, whereas *flourishing fruitful purposeful lives* is the result of a sense of purpose under God, through a saving faith in Christ Jesus. A Christ-centred life!

Wonderfully, in just 1 year I am now talking to 13 different groups up and down the country who are looking to start their own independent Christ-centred schools (from Scotland to Devon). Often church leaders being called by Christ into this! Is there a call on your life to be involved in a Christ-centred school with fruit like this?

### **Summary**

So I have sought to use Colossians 1 & 2 as an initial biblical paradigm, and then to explain 10 things you should know about Christ-centred schools. And so we have said:

A Christ-centred school education:



1. Focusses on **God's glory**
2. Recognises the primary position of **parents**
3. Only has **Christian Teachers** and Leaders
4. Grows **character** as much as academic gifting
5. Is a **Smaller family** not factory-like institution
6. Is founded in the teachings of **the bible**
7. Has a **Christ-centred approach** to curriculum and pedagogy
8. Understands a child's relationship to **discipleship and mission**
9. Is a **battle** worth fighting for
10. Has wonderful **results**

Paul's goal and mine were similar today.

“My goal is that they may **be encouraged** in heart and united in love, so **that they** may have the **full riches of complete understanding**, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden **all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**”

If we had more Christ-centred schools up and down this nation, what treasures and pearls would we and our children enjoy...

Thank you.

## Appendix 5

# Registering your school as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, as a Charity or as Company

It is possible to use a variety of company or charity structures to set up and register a school, and there are different benefits for each. The tables below summarises the advantages and disadvantages for each of the options.

1. Charity
2. Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
3. Company Limited by Guarantee
4. Charitable, Company limited by Guarantee
5. Other Hybrid Options

## 1. Charity

**A charity is an organisation which exists for public benefit and has charitable objectives such as advancing education**

Advantages	Disadvantages
The ability to claim Gift Aid - a scheme available to charities which means they can claim extra money from HMRC. The charity can claim an extra 25p for every £1 that is donated.	Trustees are ultimately liable if the charity collapsed and they would need to pay for any debts however accrued, unless they insured themselves against such an eventuality.
Charities are regulated by the Charity Commission. Regulation is 'light touch' and involves limited scrutiny.	When closing a Charity, the Trustees must distribute assets to another charity with the same or similar charitable objects. If the charity loses its charitable status the Trustees lose control of this process and the assets are given away to a similar entity.

More information on what is required to set up a charity can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/setting-up-charity>

## 2. Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

A CIO is another form of charity which has limited liability for its trustees

Advantages	Disadvantages
The CIO enjoys most of the characteristics of a limited company whilst being a charity.	If the Charity Commission revokes the charitable status, the organisation, your school, would simply cease to exist and be immediately closed. Any assets would eventually be distributed to another charity with similar objects and trustees would not have control over this.
These are relatively easy to set up and because it is regulated by the Charity Commission, it enjoys relatively 'light touch' regulation.	
It was devised to ensure the protection of trustees from liability if the charity collapses.	
The ability to claim Gift Aid.	

### 3. Company limited by Guarantee

A member controlled company, rather than one where shareholders make a profit.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Members of the company have their liability capped at the amount they put into the organisation, which can be as little as £1.	It is not possible to claim Gift Aid because there is no charitable status.
This is a straightforward way of setting up a company with a 'not for profit' ethos. It wouldn't have shares in the way that a profit making company limited by shares would and therefore there are no mechanics for this nor the need for distribution of profits.	A Company limited by guarantee is regulated by Companies House and falls within their remit and the provisions of the various Companies Acts for its regulation. The regulatory burden is higher than that of a charity or CIO.

### 4. Charitable, Company limited by Guarantee

As above but has only charitable objects, and so can register with charities commission

Advantages	Disadvantages
Were it to lose its charitable status this structure just reverts to being a company limited by guarantee; members can continue to operate the business, the school, as a non-charitable company,	Slightly more complex to set up as the company must have charitable objects to qualify as a charity and all of its activities must be charitable in 'advancing education' or otherwise.
The ability to claim Gift Aid. -	Regulated by both Companies House and the Charity Commission
	and returns have to be made to both.

### 5. Other Hybrid options

In addition to the above there can be all manner of hybrid arrangements where an organisation can have a trading division and a charity that sits alongside. This can offer great flexibility but it would be necessary to discuss options with lawyers who have experience in this area. Legislation can change so the model would need to be kept under regular review.



