

Ten Leading Schools: The spiritual influence of Christian- ethos secondary education

A unique opportunity for Church of England and other Christian-ethos Secondary schools, Academies and Free schools to share their work on spiritual development



AN INNOVATIVE, SCHOOL-BASED RESEARCH INITIATIVE FROM CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

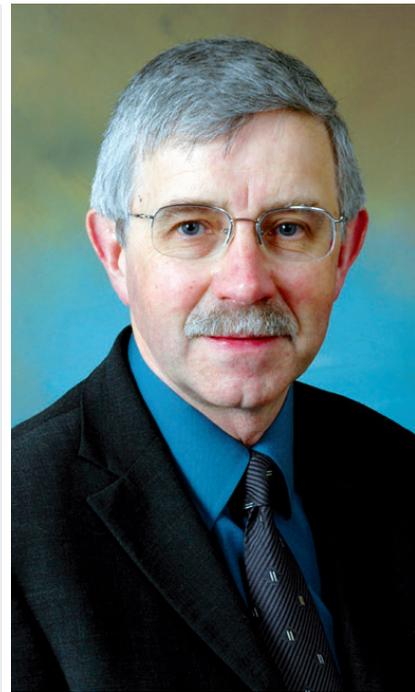
Warwick Religions and Education
Research Unit (WRERU)

National Institute for Christian
Education Research (NICER)

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

 **Canterbury
Christ Church
University**

- Does your school aspire to offer all students positive spiritual development through their experience of attending your school?
- Do you want your school to be recognised for its influence on the spiritual development of your students?
- Would you like your school to feature in a book profiling the work of ten 'leading' schools, highlighting good practice in Christian-ethos secondary schools?
- Would your school like to contribute to internationally-renowned research into the spiritual influence of Christian-ethos secondary education?
- Would your school value an active partnership with two leading universities?



Professor Trevor Cooling | Project Director

This is a unique opportunity for ten publicly-funded Christian secondary schools, academies, and free schools to participate in ground breaking research. We are looking for ten 'leading'¹ schools, which have a distinctively Christian ethos, and which seek to offer their students a positive experience of spiritual development.

The project researcher will work with you to identify what features of your school contribute to achieving positive spiritual development² for your students. The project is an opportunity to share your best practice with other Christian-ethos schools, both nationally and internationally, in the form of a published resource featuring case studies that other schools can draw on.

FEATURES OF THE PROJECT

- An initial one-day visit from the Canterbury Christ Church University researcher
- Three, week-long visits to school by the project researcher, who will interview a selection of the whole school community and observe aspects of school life that influence the spiritual development of students
- Participation in the internationally renowned Francis' attitude questionnaire by students in years 7-11
- The data gathered from these visits and the questionnaire responses will form the basis of published resources, which will tell the story of the influence of Christian-ethos secondary education on spiritual development in the selected 10 leading schools
- A grant of £1000 for each participating school
- The project will start in October 2014 and will be completed by July 2016.

¹ 'Leading' in the context of this research project refers to the school's approach to the spiritual development of their pupils. This is the key focus of the project.

² Positive spiritual development is understood as the influence on the beliefs, dispositions, attitudes, and behaviours of young people who attend them in a manner which is commended in the Christian scriptures

REASONS FOR JOINING THE PROJECT

The opportunity to:

- Explore the influence of your school on students' spiritual development
- Reflect on how your school creates a distinctively Christian ethos
- Be recognised as a school that effectively contributes to the Christian nurture and spiritual development of students
- Share your good practice
- Enhance your school community's understanding of the influence of your Christian ethos on the spiritual development of students
- Be part of an innovative research project with international reach
- Be featured in a book profiling good practice in ten leading schools
- Make a valuable contribution to research in Christian education

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The criteria against which schools will be selected will be evidence of:

1. A clearly stated aspiration to offer students spiritual development through the experience of attending the school.
2. Evidence of plans and actions to promote student spiritual development and of outcomes that show these being successful.
3. Commitment to a whole school approach to a distinctively Christian ethos.
4. Whole staff commitment to being involved in and enthusiastic about the research.
5. Feasibility in terms of practical arrangements.

TIMETABLE

Nov-Dec 2014	Initial one-day visit to participating schools
Jan 2015-Jan 2016	Three week-long visits by the researcher
Jan-Jun 2015	Administration of Francis' attitude questionnaire to years 9 &10
Sept 2015-Jan 2016	Administration of Francis' attitude questionnaire to years 7-11
Feb 2016-Aug 2016	Book, reports and articles written and results disseminated by the university researcher

HOW TO APPLY

To apply please complete and return application form, paying particular attention to the criteria for selection.

If you would like to talk further with a member of the University team, please email our administrator Elizabeth Melville (elizabeth.melville@canterbury.ac.uk), with your telephone number and request and she will arrange for someone to call you.

THE AGREEMENT

The schools selected to participate in the project will be asked to sign an agreement with Canterbury Christ Church University as follows:

The school will:

1. Commit to participate in the project from October 2014 to July 2016;
2. Identify a senior member of staff to be the link between the school and the researcher;
3. Make the practical arrangements for participating members of the school community to meet with the researcher;
4. Arrange access to the school as necessary for the researcher;
5. Give permission for, and facilitate the work of the researcher in data gathering – including interviews, observations, and administration of questionnaires;
6. Distribute and collect parental permission forms where necessary;
7. Ensure that all required permissions and necessary arrangements are in place for completion of questionnaires and for the researcher to be on site for project activities;
8. Give permission for the findings to be published.

Canterbury Christ Church University will:

1. Ensure that all aspects of the research conform to legislative requirements and the appropriate ethical standards, particularly in respect to child protection;
2. Ensure that all their researchers conduct themselves according to the highest professional standards as guests of the school;
3. Ensure that no individual involved in the research will be identified by name, except by agreement;
4. Guarantee that participation is voluntary for teachers, students and any others involved in the research, who may withdraw at any time during the research process;
5. Ensure that it is good practice that is highlighted in all published material;
6. Allow all who are represented in the book to read and offer comments before publication;
7. Provide a grant of £1000 for each school participating in the project.

To apply please complete the application form paying particular attention to the criteria for selection.

If you would like to talk further with a member of the university team, please email our administrator Elizabeth Melville (elizabeth.melville@canterbury.ac.uk), with your telephone number and request and she will arrange for someone to call you.

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