



# **Christ the Sower Ecumenical (VA) Primary School**



**Headteacher  
Dr. H. C. Humphreys**

**Deputy Headteacher  
Mrs C. Richards**

**Singleton Drive  
Grange Farm  
Milton Keynes  
MK8 0PZ**

**Tel: (01908) 867356**

**Fax: (01908) 867165**

**[Christ-the-sower@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Christ-the-sower@milton-keynes.gov.uk)**

# Contents

## Introduction from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors

### Our Vision for our School

### Welcome to Christ the Sower

- Who are we?
- How to find us?
- What sort of place are we?
- What does being an Ecumenical Church school involve?

### Admissions to Christ the Sower

- When can children start at Christ the Sower?
- What is the school admissions policy?
- Is there an admission limit?
- What happens if a child joins in the middle of a year?
- Can we reserve a place if we are coming from overseas or elsewhere in the UK?
- Do you have a nursery?

### The School Day

- What will happen at the beginning of the school day? When must my child arrive for school?
- How many hours will my child be working?
- What if I want to talk to my child's teacher?
- What happens at break times?
- How is lunchtime organized at Christ the Sower?
- What about my child's personal belongings?
- What happens at the end of the school day?

### School Dress

- What will my child wear for school?
- Does my child need a change of clothes for PE?

### Transport and Parking

- Where should I park when dropping children off for school?
- Is there a school bus or taxi service?
- Is there a place to keep bikes safe at school?
- Does the school encourage children to walk or cycle to school?

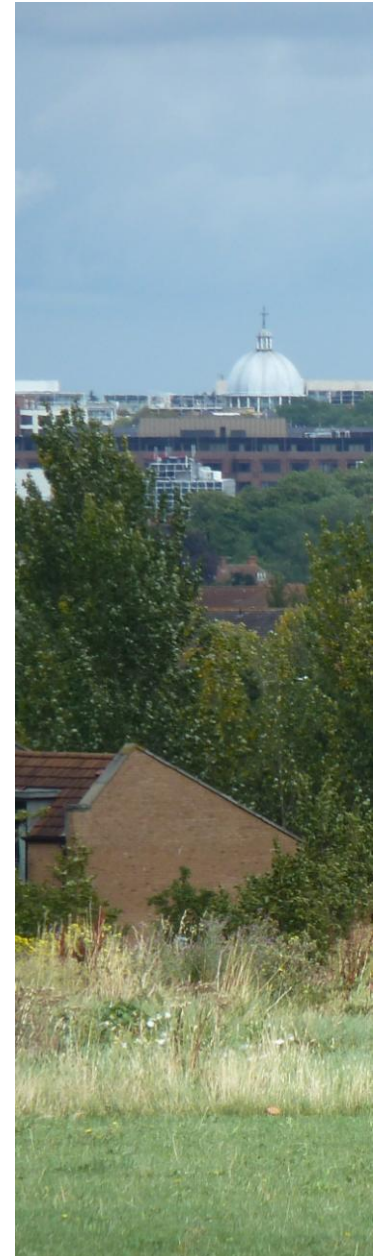
### The Curriculum at Christ the Sower

- What happens during collective worship at Christ the Sower?
- What curriculum areas will my child have access to?
- What teaching approach will be used at Christ the Sower?
- What provision is made for the teaching of Religious Education?
- What will happen if my child experiences difficulties in learning?
- How has the governing body implemented its SEN policy?
- What provision is made for children who make faster progress than others?

3  
4  
5  
5  
6  
6  
6  
7  
7  
7  
8  
8  
8  
8  
8  
8  
9  
9  
9  
10  
10  
10  
10  
11  
11  
11  
12  
12  
12  
12  
12  
13  
13  
13  
14  
14  
15  
15  
15



➤ How are classes organized at Christ the Sower?	16
➤ Will Christ the Sower be teaching Relationships and Sex Education?	16
➤ How will the students at Christ the Sower be expected to conduct themselves?	16
➤ Will my child have set homework?	17
➤ What extra-curricular activities will my child be able to take part in?	17
➤ Will the children at Christ the Sower have opportunity to take part in educational visits?	17
➤ What is the procedure for transferring to secondary school?	18
<b>Parents and the School</b>	18
➤ How does the school communicate with parents?	18
➤ How will I be able to be involved in the life of the school?	19
➤ Is there a Parent Teacher Association?	19
➤ How can I know how well my child is doing at school?	20
➤ How does the school deal with complaints?	20
<b>Health and General Issues</b>	21
➤ What if my child is absent from school?	21
➤ What happens if my child has a medical/dental appointment during the day?	22
➤ What if my child requires medication during the school day?	22
➤ What happens if my child has an accident during the school day?	22
➤ What happens if we need to take our annual holidays during term time?	22
➤ What do I do if I think my child is being bullied?	22
➤ How does the school ensure equal access and treatment for those with disabilities?	23
➤ Will my child be insured at school?	23
➤ How will I know if the school is closed due to bad weather?	23
➤ Will I receive information about the school holidays?	24
➤ What steps does the school take to protect children?	24
➤ Is the school available out of hours to other organizations?	24
<b>Standards, assessment and attendance data</b>	25
➤ How well has the school performed in KS1 Assessments?	25
➤ How well has the school performed in KS2 Assessments?	26
➤ What are the school's most recent attendance figures?	26
<b>Developing the school</b>	27
➤ What are the school's current priorities for development?	27





**Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School**  
Singleton Drive, Grange Farm, Milton Keynes, MK8 0PZ  
T: 01908-867356 F: 01908-867165  
[Christ-the-Sower@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Christ-the-Sower@milton-keynes.gov.uk)  
[www.cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk](http://www.cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk)



Dear Parents,

We would like to **welcome you and your family** to Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School! Although we are a church school with a strong Christian foundation, meaning we take the spiritual development of children as seriously as we do their intellectual, artistic and physical development, we **welcome absolutely everyone** who comes to live and work in Grange Farm and the surrounding area. There is absolutely no expectation that children and families will have a

Christian faith, or any other faith (or none), and no preference is given in any way in our admissions policy which is entirely based on where people live and whether they already have brothers or sisters here. We love being a local school and want to keep it that way.

Over the past few years, we have established a growing partnership between parents, governors, staff, children, churches and everyone else involved in the life of the school. We have worked very hard to become an open and friendly school where all children are made welcome and made to feel they can succeed. We hope that you will feel welcome to get involved and to contribute whatever you feel able to offer to Christ the Sower. For our part, we want you to feel secure and comfortable that we offer a happy and safe learning environment, where your child will make progress academically, creatively, socially, spiritually and physically. Many of you will come to Milton Keynes or Grange Farm for short periods, and we believe it is especially important for you to feel that your child will be settled and begin to make progress from the word go.

Any primary school is a special place for all those who work there, encouraging high standards and genuine commitment from all who are involved. We work hard to provide an atmosphere of care, commitment and fun – maybe “relaxed excellence” is what we would like to achieve! We feel confident that our delivery of the curriculum at Christ the Sower, and our whole-school approach to children, meets the needs of all the individuals in the school. And of course, we are ALWAYS looking to improve what we do for the benefit of your children.

We hope that our prospectus will help you to form a broad picture of our school. It has been designed to answer the many questions that you as parents, must have. If there are other questions, please ask! They will almost certainly become features in future editions!

We look forward to meeting and working with you.

**Huw Humphreys**  
Headteacher

**Beverley Delaney**  
Chair of Governors

September 2012

## Our Vision

### ***The Parable of the Sower – Our Story***

***A farmer planted seed. As he scattered the seed, some of it fell on the road and birds ate it. Some fell in the gravel; it sprouted quickly but didn't put down roots, so when the sun came up it withered just as quickly. Some fell in the weeds; as it came up, it was strangled among the weeds and nothing came of it. Some fell on good earth and came up with a flourish, producing a harvest exceeding his wildest dreams. Mark's Gospel, Chapter 4, Verses 3-8***

At **Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School** we provide the 'good earth' for all in our community to flourish; where every member can fully explore who they are created to be, with the high expectation that we, individually and collectively, will bear fruit beyond our wildest dreams. A place where we are ***loving, learning and growing together.***



***A loving community:*** At our heart is an ever-increasing understanding of God as the source of love. Because we know each child as a unique treasure, we value each other, treating each other as we would expect to be treated ourselves. Being motivated by love, we strive to be a community where everyone works for the good of everyone else.

***A learning community:*** Believing that we all can excel, we are a community that deeply desires to learn. We nurture children and adults so that we are all empowered to be fearless, lifelong learners: embracing challenge, releasing creativity, persisting through difficulty, seeing mistakes as opportunity, discovering for ourselves and responding in wonder to what we find.

***A growing community:*** We diligently strive for excellence in all we do by working our hardest and seeking to improve. At Christ the Sower we 'grow' people who are able to embrace the fullness of life, and nourish a growing community where that life can be expressed.

***A community together:*** We rejoice in our diversity and recognise that we are parts of the same body journeying together, walking hand-in-hand with God. We aim to provide a rich and true experience of Christian community, being a beacon of love, light and hope here on the West flank of Milton Keynes.

# Welcome to Christ the Sower

## Who are we?

### Headteacher

Dr HC Humphreys, MSc, PhD, NPQH

### Deputy Headteacher

Mrs C Richards, B Mus

### Assistant Headteacher

Mrs V Stobart

### Administrative Team

Mrs C Smith, CSBM (Bursar)  
Mrs S Legg (School Administrator, Admissions)  
Mrs D Bursac (Office Management)  
Mrs M King (Office Management)

### Teaching Staff

Mrs C Dryland	Y6 (Wheat)
Miss N Felstead	Y6 (Barley)
Mrs C Sohal	Y5 (Sycamore)
Miss E Underwood	Y5 (Catkin)
Mr I Fraser	Y4 (Teasel) (KS2 Leader)
Miss H Ratcliffe	Y4 (Rosehip)
Mrs J Silberrad	Y3 (Clover)
Mr D Marshall	Y3 (Mustard)
Mrs T Feil	Y2 (Pumpkin) (KS1 Leader)
Mrs S Wagland	Y2 (Pumpkin)
Mrs S Mitchell	Y2 (Acorn)
Mrs M Murphy	Y1 (Thistle)
Mrs S Armstrong	Y1 (Conker)
Mrs V Stobart	Reception (Sunflower)
Mrs D Clarke	Reception (Sunflower)
Miss K Bray	Reception (Poppy)
Mrs W Turner	Nursery (Daisy)
Mrs M Bradley	Reading Recovery
Mrs S Taylor	PE Teacher

### Pastoral Support

Rev Nick Adlem	Chaplain
Mrs S Hodgetts	Learning Mentor

### Curricular Support

Mrs K Owen	Library, First Aid
Mrs T Stock	ICT

### Teaching Support Staff

Mrs R Sandhu	Mrs G Birkett
--------------	---------------

Mrs F Head	Mrs A Bond
Miss J Rowe	Mrs L Weston
Mrs D Gray	Mrs K Ager
Mrs J Bamber	Mrs S Gomes
Mrs N Sherwood	Mrs J Pomfret
Mrs L Hudson	Mrs R Edwards
Mrs L Piggott	Mrs A Clark
Miss V Davenport	

### Lunchtime Support Staff

Mrs A Kinch	Mrs D Barrett
Mrs V Ntiamoah	Mr J Sherwood
Mrs H Ray	Mrs S Vasquez

### Site Staff

Mr J Czerniecki (site manager)	
Mrs E Agyemang	Miss L Cockitt
Mrs E Barber	Mrs A-M Antwi
Mrs P Shepherd	Mrs V Ntiamoah

### Allsorts After School Club

Mrs E Rainbow (Vacancy)	Play Leader
Mrs S Kightley	Deputy Play Leader
Mrs A Bond	Play worker
Mrs M King	Play worker
Mr J Sherwood	Play worker
Miss R Day	Play worker

### Governing Body

Mrs B Delaney (Chair)	
Mr P Morgan (Vice Chair)	
Mrs V Humes	Mrs S Harris
Mr J Davies	Mr P Taylor
Mr T Giles	Mrs V Stobart
Mrs R Sandhu	Mrs G Birkett
Dr H Humphreys	Miss J Potter
Mr I Fraser	Rev M Morris
Rev N Adlem	Mrs J Wass
Mrs S Jaffer	Mrs C Richards
Mrs A Jones	(Vacancy)

## How to Find Us

**From central Milton Keynes...**Travel west along Portway (H5) until you pass the roundabout with Fulmer Street (V3). Take the first turn on the right after the V3/H5 junction (signposted into Grange Farm) into Singleton Way. The school is on your left. Enter the public car park at the top entrance opposite the shops.

**From the North of Milton Keynes....**Travel south on Watling Street (V4) until the junction with Portway (H5) where you turn right. Travel west along Portway (H5) until you pass the roundabout with Fulmer Street (V3). Take the first turn on the right after the H5/V3 junction (signposted into Grange Farm) into Singleton Way. The school is on your left. Enter the public car park at the top entrance opposite the shops.

**If travelling south on the A5.....**take the Central Milton Keynes exit then signal right at the top of the junction. At the roundabout, bear right and follow the signpost to Shenley Church End and then the H5 until you reach the junction with the V3. Go across the roundabout, take the first turn on the right (signposted into Grange Farm) into Singleton Way. The school is on your left. Enter the public car park at the top entrance opposite the shops.

## What sort of school is Christ the Sower?

Our school is a large modern single-storey building built across two levels set on the edge of Milton Keynes in the Grange Farm development. We have our own playing fields and are surrounded by housing and grid roads.

There are 15 teaching areas, changing rooms and toilets, several small study and group work or storage rooms, a conference room, an ICT suite, a cookery room, two large halls and an office/staffroom area. Our halls are big enough to enable us to put on school productions comfortably. There is plenty of space away from the public road for children to be dropped off and collected in comparative safety.



The school was founded in 2004 and the current building was completed in January 2005 as a response to the progressive growth of housing and development on the west flank of Milton Keynes. It was designed in a contemporary style and has a basically circular design around a central courtyard area. It is fully accessible, with stairs and lifts between the two levels and there is a well-developed outdoor area for the Foundation Stage. Large fields on the south-western side of the school complement the site, and both these and the large playground area are in the process of being developed with activities and shade to make playtimes more interesting and enjoyable for

children. We have, this year, planted 40 trees, put down some new play markings for children (courtesy of Friends Together, our PTA) and over Easter 2012, erected sail shades, an outdoor classroom and a pergola area for children to sit in comfort. We are co-located with the Seedlings Sure Start Centre, which opened in Autumn 2010, and we maintain a close working relationship with the Sure Start staff for the benefit of our young children and their families.

## What does being an Ecumenical Church school involve?

Christ the Sower is an Aided Church school. Unusually for the UK, but reflecting the quality of inter-church partnerships in Milton Keynes, the school is supported by four denominations – the Church of England, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Church. All four denominations contribute to the work of the Watling Valley Ecumenical Partnership of which the school is a full partner. The word *ecumenical* simply refers to the formal arrangements of

churches sharing and working together. As a church school we try and ensure that no child leaves Christ the Sower without a clear understanding of basic Christian teaching and the implications that has for all. We offer prayer in school and help children to have a well-developed understanding of the Christian faith and of their own faith or belief system.

However, we make no assumption at all about the faith of families or staff here. The current headteacher has an active Christian faith, as do about 20% of the staff, and they are supported in this by the school chaplain, Rev Nick Adlem, the Watling Valley partnership and the Governing Body. Most staff and parents fully support our Christian ethos without feeling that they have to identify as Christians. All are welcome, all the time. We are a local school for families who live near to us.

One implication of our foundation as an Ecumenical School is that the teaching of Jesus Christ is often talked about and that we try and explore what that means for our education, for our conduct and relationships, for the wider community of which we are a part, and in the values we teach. Our school vision grows from the Parable of the Sower, and we commonly use the metaphor that we “grow” children from the soil of the Christian faith that is our foundation. This is very important to us.

## Admissions to Christ the Sower

### When can children start at Christ the Sower?

Children normally enter the Reception Class at school at the beginning of the Autumn term (if they turn 5 between 1 Sep and 31 Aug the following year). Many children come from our own nursery, but there is no automatic right of entry and children attending the nursery apply for a school place along with those from other settings.

### What is the school's admissions policy?

The Governing Body of the school is responsible for deciding on admissions to the school, but works closely with the LA (Local Authority) who co-ordinate admissions to all maintained schools in Milton Keynes. We aim to ensure equality of opportunity for all children seeking places at the school, subject to the criteria listed below in the event of over-subscription, and that the school should reflect the diversity of the local community. All children including those from other than Christian backgrounds admitted within the Priority Criteria will be assured of an inclusive education which respects other religious traditions.

In the event of there being greater demand for admission than there are places available, then children with a statement of Special Educational Need naming Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School have the highest priority, followed by children currently in Local Authority care (“Looked After Children”).

Once places have been offered to these children the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

1. A child with a normal home address in the defined area: Grange Farm, Medbourne, Oakhill and with a brother or sister still in attendance at the time of admission.
2. A child with a normal home address in the defined area, Grange Farm, Medbourne, Oakhill.
3. A child with a normal home address outside the defined area but in the area of the Watling Valley Ecumenical Partnership – bounded by H2 Miller's Way in the North, H8 Standing Way in the South, the A5 in the East and the borough boundary on the West and with a brother or sister still in attendance at the time of admission.

4. A child with a normal home address outside the defined area but in the area of the Watling Valley Ecumenical Partnership – bounded by H2 Miller’s Way in the North, H8 Standing Way in the South, the A5 in the East and the borough boundary on the West.
5. A child with exceptional medical or social needs whose parents can demonstrate that admission to Christ the Sower is necessary for the medical and social wellbeing of their child and whose application is supported by written evidence from a doctor, social worker, Education Welfare Officer or other appropriate person.

In the case of over-subscription in any category, the deciding factor will be the proximity of the child’s home to the school. This is measured by the nearest available route from the front door of the child’s home to the school’s nearest entrance gate, with those living nearer being accorded the highest priority. The system used for measuring distance and proximity to the school will be the LEA’s GIS system. There is no automatic right of entry to the school for pupils attending the nursery at Christ the Sower School. Separate admissions policies apply for the nursery and the school.

### **Is there an admission limit?**

The school has an agreed admission number of 60 children per year group. In practice, our high mobility means that class sizes do vary a lot. If our infant classes are near to 30, you will be told on application, as we cannot legally plan for infant classes with more than 30 children in them. You are entitled to appeal the decision at an Appeals tribunal if we are unable to admit your child. You will be told how to do this if the situation should arise. Our basic position is that we believe passionately in what we offer here and prefer to take children unless doing so jeopardized our ability to teach (very large class sizes, for instance).

### **What happens if a child joins in the middle of a year?**

Children arrive at Christ the Sower at all sorts of times, and we welcome them whenever they come to us. We recognise the difficulties of moving in the middle of a school year and we have adopted a policy to help children settle in as quickly and easily as possible. Your child will undergo some straightforward assessments when he or she arrives, and we will help provide friends, a “buddy” to work with them for a few days, and an older child who will look out for their interests while at playtime. You are more than welcome to come in after a couple of weeks to talk about how well your child is settling and to discuss any concerns either you or we may have.

### **Can we reserve a place at the school if we are coming from overseas or elsewhere in the UK?**

No. Although all admissions are handled by the Governors, working alongside the Local Authority, we have to be careful to follow the agreed admissions criteria, which cannot apply until you have either exchanged contracts on a property in the defined area or have a rental agreement from a landlord if you are renting.

### **Do you have a nursery?**

Yes. We have a large nursery (Daisy Class) within the building of the school, which has a maximum number of 60 places (30 in the morning and 30 in the afternoon). Nursery times are 8.30 - 11.30 a.m. (morning session) and 12.15 – 3.15 p.m. (afternoon session). If you wish to apply for a place at the Nursery, please speak to Mrs Sharon Legg, our admissions manager. A place in the Nursery does not guarantee a place at the school. Contact [slegg@cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk](mailto:slegg@cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk).

## **The School Day**

### **What happens at the start of the school day? When must my child arrive for school?**

When your child arrives at school on his or her first day, you are welcome to bring him or her to the front door of reception, where you will be met by the headteacher or one of the administrative staff. They will introduce you to your child's teacher who in turn will introduce your son or daughter to others in his/her class.

On subsequent days, children normally arrive at school through the playground, which is accessed through gates at the northern or eastern sides of the school site. These gates open at 8.30 a.m. and the doors to the classrooms will open at 8.40 a.m. Teachers take responsibility for your children from 8.40 a.m. We expect parents to be responsible for them until that time. Parents are expected to leave the site no later than 8.45 a.m. The doors from the playground into school lead directly onto the classrooms or the class shared area, and this makes sure that your children are safe as soon as they enter school.

Whilst we want to maintain open communication with parents whilst children are young, we ask that except for children in Reception and Year 1, we do not encourage parents to stay with the children as they go to their classrooms. For the sake of safety, the front gates of the school will be locked by 9.00 a.m.

Children will hang their bag and coat up on a peg in the cloakroom area, and report straight to their classrooms for registration, which takes place no later than 8.50 a.m. Once registered, children are asked to form a circle in their classes and the day begins with a "check-in" where each child shares a thought in response to a question or thought from the teacher. Classes then go to the main hall for Collective Worship at 9 a.m.

Children who arrive later than this time must first report to the school office. If they arrive after registration but before 9.10 a.m., they are recorded as a late arrival. If they arrive after 9.10 a.m., they are recorded as absent for that session.

Nursery hours are a little different: the sessions run from 8.30 to 11.30 a.m. (morning session) and from 12.15 to 3.15 p.m. (afternoon session).

## **How many hours will my child be working?**

Children at Christ the Sower are taught during a school day that lasts from 8.50 a.m. to 3.15 p.m. Break time is between 10.15 and 10.30 a.m. for KS2 and from 10.35 to 10.50 a.m. in KS1. Lunch for the whole school is between 12.15 and 1.15 p.m. *Daily Collective Worship is not counted as curriculum time, and takes place between 9.00 and 9.20 a.m. each day. Parents are welcome at any time of collective worship, especially on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.*

## **What if I want to talk to my child's teacher?**

We welcome all opportunities to talk with parents. You are more than welcome to talk to your child's teacher at the end of the school day. If you want to talk about a specific subject or issue, it is advisable to make an appointment through the school office, as staff often have clubs, meetings or other appointments at the end of the day. You can then be assured of somewhere quiet or private to talk. The start of the day is a useful time if you just need to pass on a message, but is not usually a good time for a longer talk.

## **What happens at break times?**

Children in Key Stage 2 have one break time per day, plus 25 minutes free time to play at lunchtime. In addition, Key Stage 1 children and those in Reception may have (if the teacher chooses) an additional playtime in the afternoon for 15 minutes. When their break occurs depend on the class teachers. Children in Key Stage 1 are given a piece of fruit for a break time snack, free under the National Fruit Scheme. We do not allow sweets, crisps, biscuits or chocolate to be eaten at break time, and prefer fruit or health bars (e.g. muesli bars) to be consumed.

If children want to go to the toilet at break time, they are encouraged to go on their way out or on their way back to class. Children are supervised by members of the teaching and support staff at break time.

We have a range of play equipment for both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children. This is kept in boxes within the school and distributed by older children at break and lunchtimes.

## **How is lunchtime organised at Christ the Sower?**

Children coming to Christ the Sower can have school lunches, which are cooked off site by Cygnet Catering and brought to serving temperature in our small serving kitchen. Money for lunches can be paid daily or weekly, by cash or by cheque. At present, there is no online payment method for school lunches.

If you are paying cash, we ask that children present the money in an envelope marked clearly with their name, and hand it in to be brought to the office with the register that day. The menu is published termly and is distributed to all children early in the term. It is also displayed in the hall and copies are available in the entrance area. If you think that your child may be entitled to free school meals, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Packed lunches may also be brought to school. Because we think children learn best if they are eating healthily with a balanced diet, we urge parents to provide lunches that are nutritious and healthy. If children are bringing their own drinks as part of their packed lunch, this should not be a fizzy drink, and, because of leakage/spillage problems, is in a carton or leak proof container. Children are not allowed to bring glass bottles onto the school site at all.

Classes have lunches on a rota system over two sittings, with KS1 and Foundation eating lunch from 12.15 to 12.45, and KS2 from 12.45 to 1.15. During the time they are not eating lunch, children are playing on the playground under the supervision of the dinner supervisors, or in their classes if it is too wet. Children eating packed lunches in KS2 eat these in their classrooms. In KS1, just Year 2 children with packed lunches eat in their classrooms. All other KS1 and Foundation children eat in the hall. We keep this arrangement under review so children enjoy their lunchtimes to the fullest.

## **What about my child's personal belongings?**

We encourage children to bring as few as possible of their own belongings with them to school. Children are expected to keep their personal possessions safe in their tray in class (from where they must be taken home each day) or in their school bags. Please ensure that all clothing is clearly labelled. On some occasions, class teachers will allow children to bring in games for their "golden time" (a reward time at the end of the week). Anything brought in for this purpose must be taken home at the end of school. At present, we do not allow children to bring in mobile phones. However, we recognize that sometimes this is unavoidable. If a mobile phone needs to be in school, then it should be lodged safely with the class teacher during the day. Please be aware that the school is not in any way responsible for items bought in from home, including mobile phones.

## **What happens at the end of the school day?**

School finishes at 3.15 p.m., and children are released from class as soon after that as possible, but no later than 3.25 p.m. All children are collected from their classes, though many older children walk or cycle home alone, provided that the school has been previously told of this arrangement. We ask that parents collecting children do not congregate at the doors of the classes as this can be a distraction to those being taught inside. The school gates will be unlocked at 3.05 p.m. to allow parents onto the school playground. Those children who attend after-school activities at the Allsorts Club are collected from their classrooms by Allsorts staff.

# School Dress

## What will my child wear for school?

All children attending Christ the Sower must wear the school uniform. We believe it contributes to the sense of belonging that our aims strive for. Our uniform consists of the following:

### Winter Uniform:

- \*Cranberry red sweatshirt/cardigan with CtS logo
- \*Gold polo shirts with/without CtS logo
- Dark grey trousers/skirt/pinafore dress
- \*Dark grey CtS fleece (optional)
- White/grey socks or tights
- **Black** shoes or trainers (no more than a 2 cm heel). **No boots at all.**

**Summer Term (up until the October half term):** As above, with the options of:

- Gold checked summer dresses (optional)

- Dark grey shorts (optional)
- Plain white sandals may be worn in the summer months of June and July **only**

### Hijab (White or Black only)

### P.E Kit

- Plain white T shirt \*with or without logo
- Black shorts/joggers
- Black plimsoll/white-soled trainers

Jewellery should not be worn to school. Ear studs, if worn for medical reasons, must be covered with tape or removed during PE.

Uniform marked with an asterisk (\*) can be bought from the school office. It would really help *you, your children and us* if children's names could be written in EACH ITEM OF CLOTHING! Prices are kept to a minimum and a list of prices can be obtained from the school office.

On top of this, we ask that children are dressed appropriately for the weather. This means coats, hats and gloves when it is cold; sun hats when hot and sunny. Please do not assume that children will be kept in if the weather is drizzly or cold. Children need exercise every day and whenever possible we will take them outside for playtimes, whether sunny, drizzly or cold. As they say in Norway – there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing! If children are not dressed properly in school uniform, we will contact parents. We strongly discourage the use of jewellery and other accessories that are not appropriate for school use (e.g. glitter in hair, hair shaved in patterns, hair dyed in colours outside the range of natural shades, bandanas, makeup, etc). Occasionally we may have fundraising days when these are permitted, but in general they are not allowed. Children's parents will be contacted if these are noticed. School uniform guidelines are issued annually to parents. If you are unable to afford school uniform, please contact the Bursar, as you may be eligible to apply for a grant from the Governors' Fund.

## Does my child need a change of clothes for PE?

Yes. All children must change for PE. PE takes place at least twice a week and all children are expected to bring the correct change of clothing. We do not permit children to participate in games, athletics or gymnastics without changing into their PE kit, for reasons of hygiene and ease of movement. There are often extra PE sessions for one or another reason, and you will be told in good time of the need to provide your child with his/her PE kit.

PE kit consists of a white T-shirt (no logo other than the school badge), a pair of black shorts/joggers and appropriate footwear. This should be trainers for outdoor work (games, athletics), as all indoor work (gymnastics, dance, indoor games) is taught in bare feet. The PE kit should be kept in a drawstring bag, and hung on a peg in the cloakroom area during the week. **We would ask that all PE kit is brought in on a Monday, and taken home at the weekend so it can be washed if necessary.** In the summer it is particularly important to have PE kit available through the week as teachers may

often decide to play an unscheduled game of rounders, do extra athletics practice, etc., for which children will need PE kit. *Children may be asked to miss PE if their kit does not conform to the requirements above.*

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL CLOTHING IS CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S FULL NAME**  
It is truly amazing how few people realise that without a name, all school uniform looks identical!

## Transport and Parking

### Where should I park when dropping children off for school?

We encourage as many children to walk or to bike to school as possible. This is vital for your health and your children's, as well as providing a form of friendship and fellowship between families and children not possible in a car! We strongly encourage you to make an arrangement with another parent to walk your child to school if you have to go to work by car. However, *if you need to use your car*, we ask that you park in the public car park outside the school. You are not permitted to park on the area marked by yellow lines on Singleton Drive, nor in the school staff car park. If you are intending to "drop and go", then this should be done where the road narrows and the kerb drops half way down the car park opposite the school Reception. You cannot park there (it is both inconvenient and illegal, as well as being highly anti-social), but it is by far the safest place for children to leave a car and enter the school. We are a large school and despite having an easy-to-use car park, demand is always high. You can always help by deciding to walk to school with your child, or by dropping them off outside school rather than parking.

### Is there a school bus or taxi service?

No. There is no bespoke school transport to Christ the Sower. Public buses drop off and pick up on Singleton Drive opposite the school.

### Is there a place to keep bikes safe at school?

We strongly encourage children to cycle to school – it is both safe and healthy to do so, and we have a bike shelter that is both within school grounds but also out of bounds for children during the working day. It is very important for all users of the bike shed that children secure bikes in an upright position and chain or lock them. We do not allow children to leave their bikes lying on the ground near the bike shelter.

When children on bikes approach the school grounds, they should dismount and walk their bikes to the shelter, rather than riding them. The pedestrian gates should be used for those with bikes, and cycling within the school grounds is not permitted. Children should wear cycle helmets when riding to and from school. Cycle training is offered annually to children who are 10 and over. Please note that the school is not responsible for bikes and scooters left in the bike shelter. These are left at parent's own risk and we do strongly encourage you to use a chain to lock your bikes at all times.

### Does the school encourage children to walk or cycle to school?

Definitely! Our School Travel Plan has been adopted with the intention of reducing systematically our reliance on cars. Children who have to be driven to school because of distance are encouraged to car-share where possible, but we strongly believe that children living in Grange Farm, western Crownhill and northern Medbourne should be walking or cycling wherever possible!

# The Curriculum at Christ the Sower

Being an Aided school, Christ the Sower is statutorily bound to teach the full requirements of the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 and 2, and the Foundation Stage (Early Years) Learning Goals as laid out in legislation deriving from the 1988 Education Act (and subsequent amendments). The Governing Body has adopted the Milton Keynes Curriculum Policy (5-16) as the best policy for our children.

However, we also believe that unless children are exposed to a wide range of educational experiences within and beyond the National Curriculum, we are failing the children in our care. The Curriculum is supplemented by an ever-widening range of extra-curricular activities, Modern Foreign Language teaching for older children (an entitlement since January 2010), educational visits – some relating to the National Curriculum, but some not, and by integrating projects carried out with other schools into the taught curriculum wherever possible.

We also place a high value on the “hidden curriculum” – the gaining of values through the way we teach and encourage children to behave toward each other. This means that we help children to become aware of the school aims and how we can all assist each other towards their fulfillment. As parents interested in the well-being of your child at Christ the Sower, we hope that you too will want to encourage these values within your children, so that they may grow up with a secure understanding of their life path.

We debate the nature of the curriculum constantly, and are always open to suggestions, offers of skills, new experiences that will inform and enlighten children. The knowledge and understanding of our team of highly-committed teachers are the chief source of what we really want children to learn, and individuals are encouraged to share their interests and skills with children, whether this is in the National Curriculum or not! We have rewritten our planning to enable us to teach a thematic curriculum across all classes in a particular year group.

## What is the role of Collective Worship at Christ the Sower?

ALL maintained schools in England are statutorily bound to offer daily acts of Collective Worship, that must be of wholly or mainly Christian character. As an Ecumenical aided school, we hold Collective Worship as of first importance in teaching children to think spiritually. Collective worship happens in the morning and gives children a chance to reflect, pray, think, or simply be silent and think about issues raised through biblical stories, topical themes, music, drama, etc., around a particular focus. We believe it is vital that all children experience and contribute to these times of Collective Worship. We are presently following a scheme called “Values for Life” published by the Diocese of Gloucester. We fully respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from these on religious grounds. The Collective Worship planning and curriculum is led and managed by the headteacher and the chaplain. Please feel free to talk to the headteacher for further information.

## What curriculum areas will my child have access to?

From age 5 onwards your child will have access to all **core** areas of the National Curriculum: ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE and the foundation subjects: PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE), GEOGRAPHY, DESIGN TECHNOLOGY (DT), HISTORY, INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT), ART & DESIGN, MUSIC, PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION & CITIZENSHIP (PSHE/C) and RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

The areas that children are taught in the Foundation Stage (age 3-5) from September 2012 are divided into:

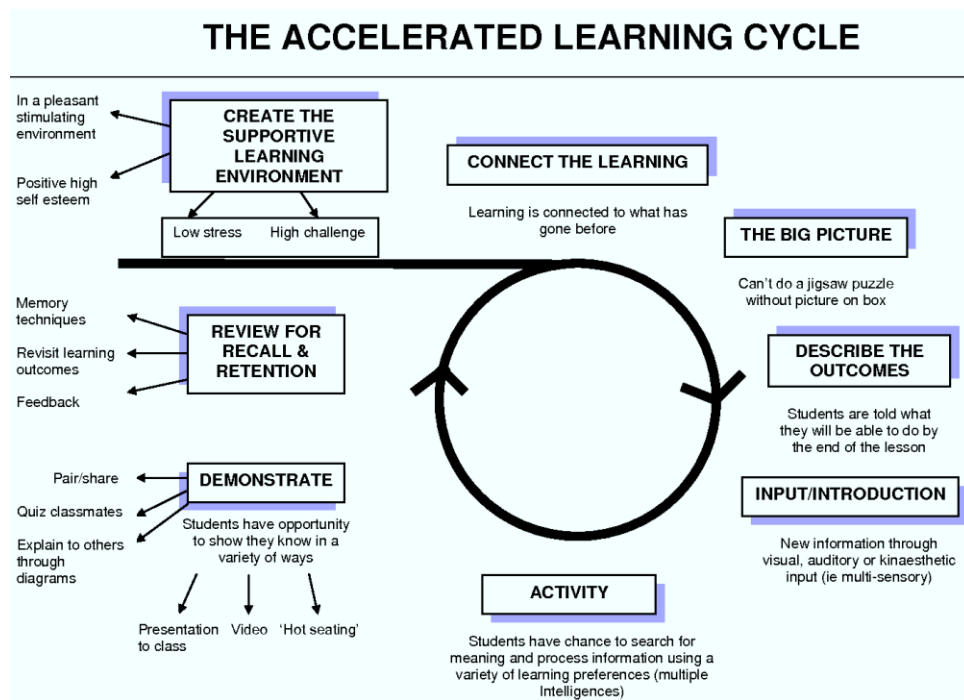
- Three *prime areas*:
  - **Communication and language,**
  - **Physical development**
  - **Personal, social & emotional development**
- Four *specific areas*:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

English, Mathematics, PE and Science, though often taught as separate subjects, make strong curriculum links with all other subjects. Art, Music, DT, ICT, Geography and History are often interlinked, and in both key stages are often grouped into themes. English and Mathematics are taught mainly through materials dating from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy teaching frameworks, set out for each year group. They nearly always take place in the morning, either side of break time. PE is taught in the hall or outside, whilst music is taught in the music room opposite Beech Hall. Please be aware that we are fast moving away from a subject-based curriculum, and looking to stronger cross-curricular teaching. Modern Foreign Languages are taught to all Key Stage 2 children, in weekly lessons by school staff (French, Y5 and Y6) and a peripatetic language teacher (Spanish Y3 and Y4).

## What teaching approach will be used at Christ the Sower?

We hold to the belief that many teaching styles help children to learn, but that variety is essential if pupils are to get the best from a lesson. All staff are aware of research on attention spans in children and do their best to keep lessons going along at a good pace. We use interactive class teaching, where pupils are expected to answer and pose questions, paired work, where pupils work on short tasks together in order to maximise everyone's learning, group learning, to help children cooperate on a task, and individual work, where pupils can progress at their own pace in order to meet the objectives set for the lesson. Group and individual work is usually differentiated in order to allow children of differing abilities to make progress, using different approaches or materials. Just like adults, children get bored at times. We believe that this can be an opportunity for reflection or pushing their learning in another direction. We try and help children respond creatively when they find boredom approaching!



Group and individual work is usually differentiated in order to allow children of differing abilities to make progress, using different approaches or materials. Just like adults, children get bored at times. We believe that this can be an opportunity for reflection or pushing their learning in another direction. We try and help children respond creatively when they find boredom approaching!

Since September 2011, we have been using the **accelerated learning cycle** as the foundation of how new knowledge is imparted and retained. We think that it is having an impact on learning across the school, and it can be summarized in the above diagram. We use it because it is built on neurological research about learning processes in the brain.

## What provision is made for the teaching of Religious Education?

Religious Education is provided at Christ the Sower using the Milton Keynes Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2011). Children are taught to learn *from* religions as well as simply *about* them. All RE teaching takes both perspectives into account. Parents who wish to withdraw their children from RE should let the school know of their intention in writing. Alternative provision will be made for any pupils who have been withdrawn, after consultation with their parents. It is a policy of our school RE provision that although children learn about major world religions, we feel that they cannot effectively explore them except from a basic grounding in Christianity. Our RE policy is available for parents to see if they

wish. RE is one of the best subjects for encouraging thinking, reflection and an early understanding of philosophy and dealing with the abstract, so we believe it is vital for children's development.

In KS1/Foundation and to the end of Year 3, RE is approximately 2/3 based on Christianity and 1/3 on Judaism. In KS2, from Y4 onwards, that changes to 2/3 Christianity, 1/6 Islam and 1/6 Hinduism, whilst continuing to include study of Judaism as the foundation of Christianity.

## **What will happen if my child experiences difficulties learning?**

Many parents face concerns if their child is not making the progress expected of them, or encounter learning difficulties that the child can't seem to get beyond. We take these concerns very seriously, and face them head-on with our provision for special educational needs (SEN). Our policy at school is based on the revised Code of Practice for Children with Special Educational Needs (DfES 2001), a summary of which is available on demand from the school office. We employ a graduated response for each child, asking the help of outside agencies if this becomes necessary. These include:

- learning support advice (SENDIST)
- behaviour support teachers
- an educational psychologist
- speech and language therapists
- occupational therapists
- teachers of the deaf/visually impaired

Within school we employ 16 Teaching Assistants (over 250 h/week of support) who work with the class teachers across all classes to enable those children who struggle with one or other area of learning to make progress. Support may be offered for a variety of reasons, ranging from specific learning difficulties and behavioural issues through to physical disabilities that may affect their learning.

Children who require support are usually catered for within the class itself, although for specific learning schemes, groups may be withdrawn if it makes it easier for the children being supported. **Mrs Richards** is the school's SEN Coordinator (SENCO), with responsibilities for ensuring that every child with special educational needs has an individual education plan that is followed by the class teacher and updated each term. If your child is assessed as having a special educational need or requiring some extra support in class, we will inform you immediately. In addition, following the Code of Practice, you will be consulted for permission before we ask any outside educational professional to assess your child.

## **How has the governing body implemented its SEN policy?**

The Governing Body, acting through the senior staff, have adopted a robust and highly effective SEN policy and practice. The level of funding we have allocated means that we choose to employ teaching assistants as the most effective and flexible means of support. A wide range of individual, group, and specifically tailored programs follows the provision of clearly written and well-evaluated Individual Education Plans from the teaching staff. We work closely with the SEN Support Teacher provided by the Local Authority and other specialists. There is a formal review of SEN policy and progress by the Governing Body each year which has the legal obligation to report this annually to parents.

## **What provision is made for those children who make faster progress than others?**

Children who show greater than expected progress in any subject are given every encouragement at Christ the Sower. From the basis of our own Policy for More Able and Talented Pupils, we provide for them through extension to the work their peers are doing in class, by fostering independence in learning so that they can research and explore beyond the confines of what is being taught in class, through specific homework, by teaching them higher-order reading and thinking skills so that they can make the most of the information they encounter, and by giving them time and space to develop and practise the talents and abilities that they already have. Our aim is to teach in such a way that we remove hindrances to children's progress at every level. Mr Humphreys and Mrs Wagland are the school leaders in matters

concerning Gifted and More Able children. Our current view of More Able and Talented children is based on the premise that more able pupils show that ability in all sorts of ways and at different times. An Israeli educationalist once put it like this – “All children are gifted. They just open their presents at different times”. We believe that every child has the capacity and right to astonish us and we need to be careful to watch out for those moments when it happens! Parents of children who have specific abilities in one or more areas are welcome to come and talk to staff about their children’s interests and specific abilities. Experience shows us that children with particular skills manifest at home are sometimes reluctant to let this shine at school, so we always seek parents’ advice on this issue. We believe strongly that *innate intelligence* is not the issue – it is whether children have a mindset to improve what they have that makes them “gifted”.

## How are classes organized at Christ the Sower?

At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, children are taught in mixed ability classes, two per year group. In Y5 and 6, classes are set for mathematics and guided reading. Most years, the classes stay together when they transfer from say, Y2, to Y3. But from time to time we re-examine these to see if the relationships are working as well and as are as productive of learning as they should be.

From time to time, children may be taught in year groups rather than classes for specific purposes, and groups of children may be withdrawn for support or extension teaching at various times during the day.

## Will Christ the Sower be teaching Relationships and Sex Education?

As a staff, we feel that relationships and sex education should be taught as a natural part of the curriculum. It is part of the National Curriculum for Science and the non-statutory orders for PSHE. Children study reproductive processes in animals within the science curriculum, whilst our PSHE teaching provides understanding for children from Years 3 to 6 of the changes in their bodies as they approach adolescence. Our Relationships and Sex Education Policy has been approved by parents, the local churches, staff and governors, and is taught principally through the Channel 4 DVD series “Living and Growing”, and through ethical teaching in collective worship. The policy is available from the office, and there is a statutory right for parents to withdraw their children from parts of the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum. Every summer, before the children are taught the RSE curriculum, parents are given the opportunity to view the DVD materials that children see. The critical issue here is that the responsibility for sex education should really lie with parents but we understand how tricky these things can be to explain; thus we support you in teaching it in school. It is important and in your long-term interest to view the materials before we show them to children!

## Golden Rules



**take responsibility**  
**respect the truth in love**  
**take pride be thankful**  
**hard work & excellence**  
**don't give up!**

*We treat each other the way we would love to be treated ourselves*

## How will the students at Christ the Sower be expected to behave?

Children at Christ the Sower consistently meet the high standards of behaviour that we set them as a staff. This has taken a lot of teaching, discussion and agreement between all the members of the school community, and we now have an ethos of which we are very proud, but which we also guard jealously! We don’t have a great number of “school rules”, but encourage each class at the beginning of each year to re-negotiate the conduct that will work best for their own class, and which is expressed in a way that all children in that class can easily learn and understand.

Underpinning this is a series of agreed, whole-school “Golden Rules” which serve as a code of conduct. This is a commitment to respect for each other, both adults and children, respect for property, both my

own and other peoples, and to treat all other people as we would ourselves want to be treated, honouring one another more than ourselves. These are rooted in Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and whilst difficult, they also present to us a range of challenges to character development that will serve children through life. Also flowing from this same approach is the Restorative Practice that we use for dealing with situations where conflict has broken the sense of community we have.

Restorative Practice, rooted in fixing broken relationships rather than blame and punishment, is the basis of our conduct policy. In this, "sanctions" are not seen as punishments, but as consequences that flow directly from damaging the relationships and community we value. The main activity all classes undertake to build community is the daily *circle*, where all meet to share the answer to a question, an opinion, an expectation or information. We feel that if children and adults do not subscribe to the community we want to build we have little chance of inspiring loyalty to it and thus using the language of *how the community has been affected* when restoring relationships.

This can be hard to achieve, and we use rewards to encourage the good and consequences which follow inappropriate or less-than-good conduct. All staff understand the consequences and rewards and use them to encourage the behaviour we want. The underlying principle is that we reinforce good behaviour with praise and expect children to notice this and conform. Class teachers try and meet with parents if we have some incipient behavioural concerns.

If we need to contact you formally over concerns we have with your child's behaviour, you need to know that this is then a serious matter. This will usually follow the recording of misbehaviour in the school incident log, or the loss of over 20 minutes Golden Time during a week. We involve parents formally at the later stages of children's misbehaviour, and you will be contacted by letter.

## **Will my child have set homework?**

All children are expected to carry on their learning from school into the rest of their lives, including the home. We encourage and expect parents to help their children by giving time to the **basic homework activities** of listening to their children read regularly, helping them practise weekly spelling or vocabulary lists, and by helping them learn their number facts. These are important disciplines for children, and will be tested weekly.

In addition, each child will be given a piece of **specific home learning** that they will have 5-6 days to complete. This is always set on a Thursday and has to be completed for the following Tuesday. The homework is deliberately open, using the form "Show me what you have learnt/know/understood...". This means that children can complete the work to the level of their interest and skills, allowing all children to flourish and to make as much of it as they can. It also means that the work is directly linked to work already completed or soon to be completed – it must be done if the child is to get the most out of his/her schooling. We encourage parents to be involved with children in the research that is sometimes required in homework. It is really important to realize that the vast majority of homework is designed to teach children to think, consider and explore, not just to repeat and remember.

## **What extra-curricular activities will my child be able to take part in?**

At present in Christ the Sower we run between 3 and 6 after-school clubs per week. Staff members and parents take clubs after school, and we are always looking for more parents and organisations to help us with others. Clubs run on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings, and vary throughout the year. They normally operate for a 6 to 8-week span in any term. Changes to the club schedule are announced in the newsletter or by text message.

Recent clubs have included: cookery, art, football, summer sports, chess (run by the school council), Frisbee, ICT, street dance, writing and orchestra. In addition to these, we regularly ask professionals in various subjects to come in and work with children - these include artists, musicians, sports experts and dramatists.

## **Will the children at Christ the Sower have opportunity to take part in educational visits?**

Visits beyond the school are often the most fundamental impetus to children's learning. Most children will have the opportunity to take part in at least two and often three educational visits per year. We regard them as an essential feature of children's education, a chance to provide a context for the learning that they undertake each term. Visits are made by year groups to support work across the curriculum.

Due to the rising costs of transport, these can often be expensive – and show every sign of becoming more so. Under the terms of the Education (Reform) Act 1988, no charge may be made for educational visits occurring during school hours. With the Governors' approval, we ask for parental contributions to cover the cost of school visits. Visits are in general unlikely to take place unless we receive as voluntary contributions a sum close to the cost of the visit. We aim to subsidize where we can, especially on the more expensive trips. If you are unable to afford the trip costs, please contact the Bursar, as you may be eligible for a grant from the Governors' Fund.

In the autumn, children in Year 6 are offered the opportunity to spend a week at the Quinta Centre near Oswestry, an outdoor pursuits centre. We use the visit to provide many of the requirements of the PE curriculum that we are otherwise unable to offer. For this reason, we strongly encourage all children to go. Parents of children in Y5 are contacted about the visit towards the end of the Autumn Term each year.

At the start of each academic year, all parents will be asked to sign a form allowing school staff to take their child on local trips. Local trips are defined as those within Milton Keynes. This enables us to save paper and to plan local visits during the day (such as walks to woods, participation in music and arts activities, sports events, etc) without a further letter. This becomes very useful if there is a sudden change in the weather or availability of certain sites. Obviously, if we need to charge for a trip, then we will contact you in good time.

## **What is the procedure for transferring to secondary school?**

Children from Christ the Sower can transfer to one of a variety of secondary schools at age eleven, though most children transfer to the Hazeley Academy. Christ the Sower staff liaise with secondary school staff before and after transfer. This liaison includes:

- ◆ An open day at the Hazeley in the Autumn Term prior to transfer (or equivalent for other schools)
- ◆ A visit from the Year group tutor at the Hazeley in the summer.
- ◆ Booklets handed out to all Y6 children to teach them about their new experience and to provide the school with information from the children themselves.
- ◆ A "move-up" day in early July when the Y6 children spend a day at their new school, and receive a full day of lessons.

In addition, we share many activities (drama days, shows, professional development opportunities) with the Hazeley Academy, so those who choose to transfer there have usually made 2-3 visits there prior to starting school.

## **Parents and the School**

### **How does the school communicate with parents?**

Our main tool for communicating with parents is the fortnightly "Life and Learning" newsletter, which contains news, reports, children's work, lists of those whose effort has been honoured in the school Golden Book, dates, etc. It is a vital piece of the parents' life at Christ the Sower. Some parents are asking to have a PDF version of "Life and Learning" e-

mailed to them. We would prefer this and if you wish it, simply e-mail the headteacher on [lifeandlearning@cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk](mailto:lifeandlearning@cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk). It is always downloadable from the front page of the school website.

Other forms of communication include the website itself ([www.cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk](http://www.cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk)), regular consultations, both statutory and non-statutory, opportunities to view children's work and meet the teaching staff, and the display monitor outside Reception where news of meetings, etc. can be found. We also send text messages to parents regularly. These are particularly used to inform parents about school closures, any important news or letters that are coming home and which might otherwise languish in your child's bag, when children have been commended in the "Golden Book" (special commendations for two children per class each week) and for other emergency information.

The school website contains a full calendar of all events for parents and children, as well as an archive of all previous editions of "Life and Learning" plus the current one, available to download. Some of the more important letters that come home to parents are also posted there.

## **How will I be able to be involved in the life of the school?**

At Christ the Sower we strongly welcome parental involvement in any area of school life where you have skills, interests or simply a desire to help. The best way is to contact school either via the office or by talking to your child's class teacher. At present we have parents helping to run after-school clubs, listening to children read and working with groups of children in the class. We recognise that this is just a "beginning" and that there is scope for much more (sports, music, art, environmental interests, etc). We also provide training for those who wish to get the most out of (and put the most into!) hearing children read. From time to time, we invite parents to help children as part of a "working party" in clearing the pond area, pruning trees, etc.

If you *do* wish to help in any way at all, you will be asked to fill out a Criminal Records Bureau clearance form. Since early 2002, all adults regularly in contact with children have been asked to do this. The school will help you with the form if you wish! While awaiting the processing of your form, we are happy that you work with children with other adults present in class or in a public part of the building where you can be seen easily. This is for everyone's protection.

We have a Parent Council, a consultative, non-decision making body of about 20 parents who have two meetings per term with the headteacher, assisting the school by ensuring that we have a clear and open channel of communication with parents. Please see the headteacher if you are interested in attending.

Once a term, the Parent Council holds a Parent Information Evening. This is usually a mixture of new information, opportunities for children, perspectives from the school and a chance to ask questions. PowerPoint presentations or slides used in these are often displayed on the school website.

As currently constituted, the Governing Body has three parent governors, and we strongly encourage parents to put their names forward when vacancies arise. They offer a vital perspective on the governance of the school, as well as being excellent personal development for the parents who offer themselves for this role.

## **Is there a Parent Teacher Association?**

A definite yes! Christ the Sower PTA is a very strong part of school life, and is called Friends Together. Through major school-based fund-raising events, it raises nearly £4000 per annum. They run discos, sell second hand (and good quality) school uniform, and help the school in many other ways. They perform a vital function in the school. Should you be interested in being involved, please contact Mrs. Suzanne Allard, c/o the school, for more details, or e-mail [friends@cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk](mailto:friends@cts.milton-keynes.sch.uk)

## How can I know how well my child is doing at school?

For a number of reasons we believe it is very important that you are confident of how well your son or daughter is doing at school. Informally, you are of course welcome to check from time to time at the beginning or end of the school day with your child's class teacher. However, we also have more formal ways of helping you get an insight into your child's progress.

- ◆ Target-setting. Twice a year, we hold parents' evenings in classrooms. You will receive notification of a 5-10 minute appointment about a week before the event. At these appointments, you review with your child's teacher the targets that your son or daughter has been set for the previous term, and then receive a set of new targets which your child is expected to work towards over the next term. These targets are sent home so that when your child is working on their homework, you can help them towards specific medium-term goals that have been set out for that term. The targets tend to be things that need a term's worth of practice for a child to grasp securely, e.g. practicing certain multiplication tables, correcting punctuation, etc.
- ◆ Reports. Once a year, in the Summer Term, the school issues a written report on your child. This is a summary of the previous year, and for each subject offers a way forward for the following year. Shortly after the reports go home, we offer an open evening to show off the work children have been doing. You are welcome to talk informally with class teachers at this point, or make an appointment to talk to your child's class teacher about issues raised in the report.
- ◆ If we feel that there are grounds for concern in your child's behaviour or attitude to work, or if we feel that by explaining something to you it would enable your child to make faster progress, we may ask you to come in and talk with your child's class teacher or with one of the senior leadership team.
- ◆ Statutory Assessments. When your child is 11, s/he will sit a series of tests called the Key Stage 2 SATs (Standard Attainment Tests) in English and Maths, usually in the second week of May. These are a statutory requirement, and when the results are known (normally in July), we report them to you, both as a summary document of your own child's results, but also a percentage summary of how well the year group did as a whole. During the same week, all children in Y3, 4 and 5 sit non-statutory tests in English and Maths devised to support teachers in making judgments of pupil progress. Children in Y2 are statutorily assessed by their teacher during the Summer Term and their results reported to parents in July. From 2012-13, children in Reception are assessed against statutory Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception Year. From 2012, Year 1 children undertake the Phonics Screening Check.

At all times, we would encourage you to speak to us sooner rather than later if there are any concerns about progress that you wish to raise with the school.

## How does the school deal with complaints?

The teaching staff involved in the running of the school on a day-to-day basis, should be a parent's first "port of call". Please help us to be well informed about your concerns or complaints by approaching us directly and quickly. Should you wish to discuss a broader issue, you are of course welcome to contact the head teacher for an appointment to discuss the matter. However, if it concerns something within the class, it is always best to go to the class teacher, for the simple reason that he/she will be better informed than anyone else.

Our Complaints Procedure can be summarized in the following way:

**Stage 1—Informal:** If you have a concern about anything we do, you can tell us by telephone, in person or in writing. We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally, either by putting matters right or by giving you an explanation. If there is something you are not happy about, or you don't understand why we are doing something in a

particular way, please come in and discuss it with the teacher or another appropriate member of staff. If the first person you talk to cannot help, then speak to a senior member of staff or the Headteacher. The school will usually reply to you within a day or so, but always within seven days. We should be able to sort out your concerns, but if this is not possible, you can take your complaint to the next stage.

**Stage 2—Formal:** If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, you can complain formally to the Headteacher, by completing the form which is available in the school office. The Headteacher will arrange to investigate your complaint and may invite you to the school to discuss the issue. When your complaint has been fully investigated, the Headteacher will respond to your complaint in writing, normally within fourteen days from receipt of the form. If your complaint relates to the Headteacher and is not resolved at the informal stage, you may write to the Chair of Governors outlining your complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange to investigate the matter, which will normally involve meeting with you to give you the opportunity to present your evidence verbally. The Chair of Governors will complete his/her investigation within twenty one days on receipt of the formal complaint and will inform you of the outcome in writing.

**Stage 3—Review:** If you are not satisfied that the procedure has been followed correctly or that your complaint has been addressed inappropriately, you may request that the Governing Body reviews the Chair of Governor’s handling of the complaint. Any such request would need to be made in writing within fourteen days on receipt of the Chair of Governor’s letter to you. The Governing Body’s complaints panel will meet within twenty one days on receipt of the request to review the details of the complaint and the evidence provided. The chair of the panel will send you a letter within five days of the meeting, notifying you of the outcome of the review. It is anticipated that the small number of complaints that may be referred to the panel can be resolved satisfactorily through this process. The panel’s decision is final. If we cannot resolve the problem within the timescale given, we will write to you and tell you why there is a delay and when we will be able to respond.

*Complaints about the curriculum and Religious Worship.* Under section 409 of the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has established arrangements, approved by the Secretary of State (Education), for dealing with formal complaints about the curriculum or any related matter to the Governing Body, the Local Authority or both. Parents and others who want to find out more on this matter should contact the headteacher in the first instance, who will be able to let them see a copy of the Local Authority’s arrangements.

## Health and General Issues

### What if my child is absent from school?

All children between the ages of 5 and 17 are required by law to attend school. Should your child be absent from school due to illness, you will need to provide a written note on their return to school. This can be given to the class teacher. However, it is in everyone’s best interests for you to inform the school by phone or e-mail before the beginning of the school day (8.50 a.m.), if your child is going to be absent. Teachers mark registers at 8.50 a.m., and it is far better that they are informed of absences prior to that time.

At Christ the Sower we value promptness. Children arriving between 8.50 and 9.10 a.m. are recorded as “late”, but more importantly they struggle with having missed the communal “circles” that we use to build community and class identity, and come late into collective worship. Children who come into school after 9.10 a.m. are recorded as absent for that session. Please make every effort to get children to school on time.

If a prolonged illness or absence is likely, please telephone or e-mail the administrator. Please note that if a child has suffered with diarrhoea or vomiting, a period of at least 24 hours and preferably 48 hours must elapse between the end of the symptoms and the return of the child to school.

Any unexplained absences from school will be recorded as unauthorised.

## What happens if my child has a medical/dental appointment during the day?

If you know in advance that your child has a medical or dental appointment during the school day, inform the school administrator or your child's class teacher, the day before if possible. Obviously, if an accident has occurred, or toothache has developed overnight, a simple phone call to the school in the morning will suffice. If an appointment is in the middle of the day, we recommend you bring the child to school then collect him/her from the foyer at a pre-arranged time. Usually children can be brought directly to school afterwards.

## What if my child requires medication during the school day?

Normally, if a child requires medical treatment they should remain at home until the treatment ends.

However, there are times when children may be attending school and continuing with medication. Any such medicines needed by a child during the school day must be given to the administrator, ***accompanied by a letter from you, the parents, or from the prescribing doctor***, explaining the administration of the medication. You will also need to indicate whether you give permission for the drug to be administered. **This is also the case** if a child requires an inhaler for respiratory conditions, although in these cases the medication is kept by the class teacher for use by the child (Foundation, Years 1 and 2), or by the child themselves in their tray (Years 3-6). A form, part of the school's Health and Safety Policy, can be used for this purpose and can be obtained from the school office. Children requiring emergency treatment for anaphylactic conditions (usually involving administration of an epipen) or who have conditions such as diabetes, should inform all adults who deal with the child, and also the head, who will ensure that training is given to those who need it by the School Nurse.

It is very important that you do not send any form of medication into school with your child, e.g. throat sweets, Calpol, etc. If they need to be administered, they are to be regarded exactly the same as the medications above, i.e. brought in by yourselves, with the appropriate documentation completed. When antibiotics are being administered on a 3-times-a-day basis, these must be kept and administered at home. If the prescription is for 4-times-a-day, we are happy to help with the lunchtime dose, but require a medical letter and will ask you to complete a form to authorise us to do so. Whilst we will be as helpful as we can be, individual members of staff have the right to refuse to administer treatment if they are uncertain about doing so.

## What happens if my child has an accident during the school day?

Cuts and grazes from falls on the yard (by far the most common accident in school) are dealt with by triage-trained First Aid staff. We always inform parents of any injury either in person or with a written note. If the injury is of a serious nature, we will contact you and the emergency services immediately. If we are unable to contact you after repeated attempts, and the injury is serious enough to warrant it, the child will be taken by ambulance to the Accident and Emergency Department of Milton Keynes Hospital. If the injury is to the head, we will ring home immediately to inform and consult with you. In most cases of head injury, we would recommend that you take the child home and seek medical advice.

## What happens if we need to take our annual holidays during term time?

Parents may APPLY to withdraw their children during term time for family holidays, providing their child is not absent for more than 2 weeks during the academic year. As a parent, you will need to obtain an application form from the School Office, and submit it to the headteacher for approval. This is a legal requirement and as the law currently stands, the headteacher is authorized to approve or refuse approval for a holiday. There is no appeal system should the visit not be authorized. Your child may be expected to carry out some work if the holiday is taken during school term, and we ask that you check with your child's teacher to see if this will be necessary. We reserve the right to set work for children during their holiday if this is taken during term-time.

Please note that it is extremely inadvisable for children (and especially those in Y6) to be absent during the Statutory Assessment Tests, which normally take place in the second week of May. Our annual assessments of children in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 also take place during the week of the KS2 SATs. Please do not plan holidays during this time. The tests nearly always fall during the second full week in May each year. We strongly advise you to contact the school FIRST before booking a holiday. Another time for holidays that is detrimental to how the child feels about school is at the very end of a school year or (even more detrimental) at the start of a new school year.

## **What do I do if I think my child is being bullied?**

If you suspect or have evidence that your child is unhappy in any way, please speak first to the class teacher, who will be skilled at helping your child to feel happier and more at home in the class. If there is any incidence of bullying by other pupil/s, then please also report this to your child's teacher who will deal with what s/he can, and then inform the head if further action needs to be taken. We will do our best to keep you informed of all we do in relation to the situation. Do tell us also if there are circumstances of bullying or unhappiness for your child outside the school. We can often help simply by reporting back to you how your child has responded and whether we think the problem is persisting into school time as well.

## **How does the school ensure equal access and treatment for those with disabilities?**

Christ the Sower is a school that has a strong tradition of treating everyone equally. To ensure this, every policy written since 2011 has a section on equal opportunities provision on the grounds of gender, race and disability, and our teaching program ensures that all children learn to treat each other with respect and not just acceptance. All children are admitted without any regard to disability, and in all cases, we accept the judgment of the Local Authority Admissions Team if admitting a child who is disabled exceeds our admissions number. There are accessible entrances front and back and an accessible toilet near to the office area of the school. An Equality Policy, compliant with the 2010 Equality Act, was adopted in summer 2012.

## **Will my child be insured at school?**

Milton Keynes Council provides cover against its own legal liability for injury, damage or loss that might arise as a result of negligence. The policy carried is known as a "third party liability" policy, which covers the Council, teachers, adult supervisors and pupils whilst engaged on County Council business – in the case of schools, school organized activities. **There is no individual personal accident insurance for children.** As parents, you can take out such insurance for your children if you wish. **However, the school does take out personal accident insurance cover for school visits.** Any parents using their own vehicle to transport children on school visits, etc., should make certain that they have the correct insurance and an up-to-date MOT certificate, as well as a booster seat for children less than 135cm high.

## **How will I know if the school is closed due to bad weather?**

In the event of extreme weather conditions or the failure of heating it may be necessary to close the school. The fundamental need is to look after children safely, so closure will be dependent on the ability of staff to reach school, not the quality of the weather! On registration, parents are requested to give emergency telephone numbers so that we are sure of being able to inform every parent if school has to be closed during the day. In the event of closure at the beginning of the day, we inform the Local Authority School Closure website, and also text message all parents. If enough staff can make it to school, we will keep school open, and make the best of the weather conditions (especially if it is snow!!). Closures will also be announced on the front page of the school website.

## **Will I receive information about the school holidays?**

Information on school holidays is posted in the Administrator's office. This information also appears as an appendix to this prospectus. We send it out separately every year to each parent as well. It also appears on the school website. Milton Keynes Council suggest term dates for school and each school will then choose when to hold 5 INSET days during the year. This information is sent out to parents at the beginning of the Summer Term.

## **What steps does the school take to protect children?**

The most important thing we do is to provide a safe and secure environment and to care for all children on the school site. We have a security system at the front of the school so that nobody can enter the site without speaking to the administrator or another member of staff. All visitors to the site have to sign in and out, and wear badges whilst on the premises.

### *Child Protection*

The protection and care of all children at Christ the Sower is the first responsibility of everyone employed at the school. We work hard to guarantee the safety and security of all children on our site. All staff have received training in the school's anti-bullying policy and all children are aware of the consequences of such harmful behaviour. All staff have also received Child Protection Training and are aware of the steps to take in the reporting of any evidence of abuse. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and learning mentor are the named Child Protection Teachers. We liaise with the Child Protection team in Milton Keynes Social Services and receive regular and appropriate training. If we suspect that there is any evidence of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect affecting any child in our care, we are legally bound to report it to Social Services, and we do. Staff and governors are trained in Child Protection issues biennially. Our Policy for Child Protection has recently been updated. It is a robust document fully compliant with UK expectations, and is available for viewing at the school.

### *Health and Safety in School*

Health and safety throughout the school is monitored by the Governing Body's Resources and Environment Committee, assisted by the Headteacher. Whilst all persons are responsible for their own safety and the safety of others, the committee monitors all health, safety and security matters on a termly basis. A full audit is carried out annually and a copy sent to the Local Authority, although to keep on top of things we carry out termly checks. The school health and safety policy is lodged in the school for inspection. Particular attention is given to school visits when procedures include risk assessment of the site to be visited, vetting of safety standards of the transport and briefing of staff as to health and safety throughout the visit. Regular Fire Safety audits are also completed.

## **Is the school available out of hours to other organizations?**

Yes. The governors have adopted a lettings policy, which can be inspected at the school. Please contact the Bursar, Mrs Smith, for further information, or e-mail [Christine.Smith4@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Christine.Smith4@milton-keynes.gov.uk).

## Standards, assessment and attendance data

### How well has the school performed in KS1 Assessments?

KS1 TA 2012 Level	PSc	1	2			3	2+	2b+
			2c	2b	2a			
Reading TA	0	12	8	30	18	32	88	80
Writing TA	2	17	18	35	20	8	81	63
Speaking/Listening TA	0	12	82			7	89	89
Maths TA	0	5	18	37	23	17	95	77
Science TA	0	8	92			0	92	92

KS1 TA 2011 Level	PSc	1	2			3	2+	2b+
			2c	2b	2a			
Reading TA	0	13	7	30	30	20	88	80
Writing TA	2	11	27	39	13	9	88	61
Speaking/Listening TA	0	9	88			4	92	92
Maths TA	0	11	20	29	29	13	91	70
Science TA	0	18	77			4	81	81

## How well has the school performed in KS2 Assessments?

KS2 TA/SAT 2012 Level	A	Below 3	3	4	5	4+
<b>English</b>	TA	2	12	53	33	86
	Test	8	10	43	38	82
<b>Maths</b>	TA	2	25	47	27	73
	Test	3	28	43	25	68
<b>Science</b>	TA	2	10	53	35	88
	Test	5	12	57	27	83

KS2 TA/SAT 2011 Level	A	Below 3*	3*	4	5	4+
<b>English</b>	TA	2	12	59	27	88
	Test	2	18	51	29	80
<b>Maths</b>	TA	2	14	53	31	84
	Test	2	24	43	31	73
<b>Science</b>	TA	0	16	59	24	83

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

## What are the school's most recent attendance figures?

During the school year 2010-11, the most recent year for which full data is available, the following absences were recorded:

a	The total number of pupils of compulsory school age on roll for at least one session	<b>429</b>
b	The percentage of half days (sessions) missed through authorised absence	<b>4.03%</b>
c	The percentage of half days (sessions) missed through unauthorised absence	<b>0.36%</b>

## What are the school's current priorities for development?

The school re-assesses, on an annual basis, its priorities for development. In this process it takes into consideration external views (OFSTED, Church of England diocese, Milton Keynes Children's and Young People's Services) as well as internal views (children, parents, teaching and teaching assistant staff). However, the responsibility for the direction the school takes lies with the leadership team and governors, and it is they who have the final say. For 2012-13, our priorities are summarized in this diagram.

