10 December 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

Plymouth CAST Vision and Values

Earlier this term, everyone involved in CAST looked again at our vision and values - why we do what we do and what we want to achieve – and how we express that vision. The headteachers led a consultation which invited all members of staff, pupils, parents and governors to have a say about what we should be aspiring to in our schools.

Plymouth CAST is a multi-academy trust of 35 Catholic schools and one nursery with 7,300 pupils and 1500 staff. It was a challenge to collect the views of so many people, but the headteachers did an excellent job in providing an opportunity for those who wished to have a say.

There were some who thought that there was a risk in conducting such an exercise since you might end up with very different views. That did not happen. While there were different emphases, there was a great deal of common ground about the kind of education we want for our children and young people. You can find the full Vision and Values paper on our website at -

http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_vision_and_values/276905

The main elements of our vision are that we want every one of our pupils to be educated to the highest possible standard in a safe, happy and enriching environment so that they leave us with the qualifications and skills they need to flourish in the next stage of their journey and to make the world a better place, inspired by the Gospel.

Bishop Mark O'Toole, in his Foreword, said, "We seek to improve the life chances of every child by raising their aspirations. This is not for personal gain, but so that through education they may come to serve their brothers and sisters in our world, especially the vulnerable."

A Catholic education insists on the highest standards for every pupil, not for their own advantage, but so that they can contribute to the common good in whatever career path they follow in adult life.

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Another way to look at this is to ask what we want our pupils to leave us with? We came up with a list, which many of our pupils contributed to. When our vision becomes a reality, our pupils will leave us with:

- A sense of their dignity and worth as a person loved by God
- A sense that creation is God-given and good and we have a duty of care towards our common home
- The best academic qualifications they were capable of achieving to allow them to flourish in adult life
- A sense of service to the world, especially to the disadvantaged
- A sense that they are gifted and called to a vocation of service in life
- Happy memories of their time in school, especially of how adults made them feel – a sense of belonging.

In CAST we are emerging from a period when we were challenged by the government to offer a better quality of education in some of our schools. We are now making rapid progress to ensure that all of our schools are good or outstanding.

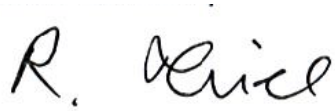
There is of course work still to do but we are well on the way. I have visited every one of our schools and I have seen for myself the excellent commitment of our staff and governors to the education and formation of your children.

The next step will be to make sure that our vision becomes a reality. The first draft of a strategic plan will go to the CAST Board on 14 December. This will provide the 'road map' to turn our vision into reality.

I'll be meeting with all of our headteachers next in the week beginning 14 Jan 2019. If there are any points you'd like to raise, please contact your headteacher before then and ask them to bring it to the meeting.

In the meantime, I wish you all a very peaceful and joyful Christmas.

With thanks and very best wishes



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