How can we help our children and young people to succeed at school and in life?

Core Values, Student Learning & School Transformation

Wednesday 2nd May 2012
An event for Parents, Public and Policy-Makers
Venue: Trinity Academy, Thorne, Doncaster DN8 5BY

Speakers: 
Ian Brew, Principal of Trinity Academy, Doncaster
Dr Mark Pike, Reader in the School of Education at the University of Leeds,
Director of the ESRC/AHRC-funded research on Trinity Academy
Sixth Formers at Trinity Academy (Students 2005-2012)
Dear Parent,

Thank you for attending this event at Trinity Academy. I hope you enjoy today’s event and find it helpful. It is based on work I have carried out between 2007 and 2012 at the Academy and it is a privilege to share some of the findings with you. The recent Ofsted report on Trinity Academy judged it to be ‘Outstanding’ and it is in the top 3% of schools nationally for value-added. In other words children achieve better results at Trinity in relation to their ability than in 97% of schools in this country. We know good results at school are the passport to further and higher education and to good jobs where more and more complex skills are required. This event is about how children and young people can be ‘outstanding’ in life and at home not just at school.

Trinity has high expectations of young people and is especially good at raising their aspirations. Most parents I have met want their children to do better in life than they did. They want their children to aspire to greater things than they achieved. Over 60% of students at Trinity are likely to be the first in their family to go to University and you will have the opportunity to listen to some of them today and on the DVD enclosed at the back of this pack. I was in the same position as many of these young people when I was eighteen. My parents had left school when they were fifteen and I was the first in my family to go to University. I know what a big step this is for a young person and how important it is in achieving a better future. Other students have secured excellent positions in employment and apprenticeships and have a bright future.

What I have found during the course of the research is that Trinity prepares children and young people well for life. This is not just through academic work; it is by fostering the values that support a good life. After all, we don’t want our children to pass exams and ‘flunk’ life. It has been said that parenting is the most difficult and also the most rewarding of jobs to have. My wife and I have three children and know this is true. I have documented the emphasis at Trinity on building the character of the child by encouraging the core values of Honourable Purpose, Humility, Compassion, Integrity, Accountability, Courage and Determination. These are values that are widely supported by students and teachers and are underpinned by an inclusive Christian ethos that sees each child as unique and of great value. The challenge for all of us who are parents is how we encourage these values at home and support the work of schools such as Trinity that promote these values. I hope this conference pack and DVD provide some insights that will support you and help your children succeed in life as well as at school.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Pike

Dr Mark Pike
BA (Hons), PGCE, MA (Ed), Ph.D
Reacer (Associate Professor), School of Education, University of Leeds
The Context and Development of Trinity Academy

Trinity Academy lies at the heart of the former mining community of Thorne, near Doncaster, in Yorkshire, in the North of England. The area served by Trinity was ranked in the worst ten per cent nationally for unemployment and in the worst four per cent in the country as regards educational attainment when it opened in 2005. Health levels were within the worst five per cent nationally and the area had the fourth highest concentration of single parent families nationally. The standards at the local comprehensive school serving the community of Thorne and Moorends were in need of significant improvement before being transformed into an Academy.

In 2004, in the predecessor school to Trinity Academy only 21% (one in five) students ‘passed’ GCSE at grade C or above in at least five of their school subjects, a performance significantly below the national average. In 2006, after the Academy’s first year only 34% of students ‘passed’ their five school subjects at GCSE grade C. Yet by 2007, 65% of students experienced this level of academic success and by 2008 74% of students achieved these results.

By 2010, 95% were achieving this level of success. In 2010 Trinity was the ‘Most Improved Academy or Specialist School in Yorkshire and Humberside for 5+ A*-C grade GCSEs including Maths and English’. Trinity was declared to be ‘Outstanding’ following inspection by Ofsted in 2011. It is now in the top 3% of all schools nationally for ‘value-added’. In other words, students at Trinity do better at school, in relation to their ability, than 97% of schools in the country.

Many of the students who started at Trinity in 2005 are now the first in their family to go to University. Others have secured excellent jobs or apprenticeships. What began as a very small Sixth Form now has around 300 students. All have had the benefit of a school that emphasises core values and the importance of good character.
Helping Children and Young People to Develop Good Character

For the original research project I interviewed Mr Ian Brew (Trinity's Principal) the day after he had been at a high profile ceremony in London receiving awards for Trinity being the most academically improved academy in England and the most academically improved secondary school in Yorkshire and Humberside. During the recorded interview I asked Mr Brew whether ‘character’ or ‘academics’ was the most important priority at the academy. Without the slightest hesitation, and in his typically direct way, he replied:


c

Character. I’ve said it's character first and then the rest will come.
If you've got character first the rest will come (Mr Brew, Principal)

c

This was striking because many schools seem to focus first and foremost on academic results and the percentage of students getting their 5 GCSEs at grade C or above. Here was a school that was doing better academically than other schools and yet its main priority was the character of the child and not the piece of paper saying how many GCSEs the child had achieved. I found out that Trinity was offering students and families what might be described as ‘Character Education’. It is not surprising that a school the focuses on the character of its students should improve academically. In fact, this substantiates research findings that:


quality character education results in academic gains for students

(Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 78).

Approaches vary but ‘if a school-based initiative targets character development’ as defined by Berkowitz and Bier (2004) ‘in either its program design or its outcomes and goals, then it is a form of character education’ (Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p.74):


Character education has been demonstrated to be associated with academic motivation and aspirations, academic achievement, prosocial behaviour, bonding to school, prosocial and democratic values, conflict-resolution skills, moral-reasoning maturity, responsibility, respect, self-efficacy, self-control, self-esteem, social skills, and trust in and respect for teachers

(Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 75)

Trinity Academy’s emphasis on character is distinctive and ‘homegrown’. There are some good books available on Character Education for parents, teachers and school leaders. Some of the best books available for parents are Parenting for Good by Dr Marvin Berkowitz and Raising Good Children by
Dr Tom Lickona. The full title gives a flavour of what it’s all about: *Raising Good Children – From Birth Through the Teenage Years – How to help your child develop a lifelong sense of honesty, decency, and respect for others*. For teachers and school leaders two excellent books are *Educating for Character - How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility* (1991) and *Character Matters* (2004), both by Dr Tom Lickona. My paper on Trinity Academy’s approach to character education can be ‘found in the *Journal of Research on Character Education* (Pike, 2010).

A school’s ‘ethos’ or ‘character’ is founded upon its values and in our book *Citizenship and Moral Education – values in action* (Halstead and Pike, 2006), Professor Mark Halstead and I defined ‘values’ as: ‘enduring beliefs about what is worthwhile, ideals for which people strive and broad standards by which particular practices are judged to be good, right, desirable or worthy of respect’ (Halstead and Pike, 2006: 24).

While many schools have good values, few appear to be as clear as Trinity about what they are. Values need to be communicated if learners are to embrace them. One of the merits of Trinity’s approach is that its Core Values are so clear. They are communicated across the whole school as well as in lessons. When I asked Dr Julie McGonigle, then the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, how significant the Core Values were in achieving the success at Trinity, her response was unequivocal: ‘They are the single greatest factor’. The core values do not simply appear on a card which each student has; nor are they only displayed, etched in a glass wall in a strategic location (the image on the front cover). They are pervasive. Students know what they are and talk about them. They even hold teachers accountable to them. If you imagine buying a stick of rock at the seaside and finding the words of the resort running the length of it wherever you snap the rock, you have some idea of the way the Core Values are embedded at Trinity.

When I recently conducted a survey of Sixth Formers at Trinity, 92% of them agreed that the school’s Core Values were good values to follow in life and endorsed them. It is important to define what those values if everyone is to ‘buy-in’ to them. Upon the ‘values card’ belonging to each student, we read that ‘all our work will be characterised by the following values’:

Comparing the 7 Core Values of Trinity Academy with the 10 essential virtues for strong character described by Dr Tom Lickona is illuminating especially when one considers that the two have developed in isolation of each other.
**Essential Virtues** (Lickona, 2004)

1. Wisdom or Good Judgement

'how to put the other virtues into practice – *when to act, how to act*…
Wisdom enables us to discern correctly, to see *what is truly important in life*, and to set priorities'

2. Justice

'includes so many of the interpersonal virtues – civility, *honesty, respect, responsibility* and ‘tolerance’

3. Fortitude

*'to do what is right* in the face of difficulty…
*Courage*, resilience, patience, perseverance, *endurance*, and a healthy *self-confidence* are all aspects of fortitude’

4. Self-control (temperance)

'Self-control is the ability to govern ourselves…
to control our temper, regulate our sensual appetites and passions…It’s the power to resist temptation’

5. Love ‘selfless love’

'A whole cluster of important human virtues – *empathy, compassion, kindness, generosity, service*, loyalty, patriotism…and forgiveness make up the virtue of love’

6. A **Positive Attitude**

'The character strengths of hope, enthusiasm, flexibility, and a sense of humor are all part of a *positive* attitude’

**Core Values** of Trinity Academy

*All our work* will be characterised by the following values

**Determination**

We know that hard work and the refusal to give up are essential if we are to achieve *anything worthwhile*.

**Integrity**

We can be *trusted to be honest* and truthful, to say what we mean and to do what we say.

**Accountability**

We recognise that having the freedom to express ourselves means we *must also accept responsibility* for our words, thoughts and actions.

**Courage**

We aim *to do what is right*, whatever the cost; we stand up for the weak, whatever the danger; we *face our fears* and find ways of defeating them.

**Accountability**

We recognise that having the freedom to express ourselves means we must also *accept responsibility* for our words, thoughts and actions.

**Compassion**

We *care for those who are in difficulty and who are hurting*, recognising that the *world does not exist for us* alone.

** Honourable Purpose**

We aim *to be positive* in everything, doing what is good and aiming to benefit others as well as ourselves.
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<tr>
<th>Essential Virtues (Lickona, 2004)</th>
<th>Core Values of Trinity Academy</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7. Hard Work</strong></td>
<td>Determination</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘hard work includes initiative, <em>diligence</em>, goal-setting, and resourcefulness’</td>
<td>We know that <strong>hard work</strong> and the <strong>refusal to give up</strong> are essential if we are to achieve anything worthwhile.</td>
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<td><strong>8. Integrity</strong></td>
<td>Integrity</td>
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<td>‘being faithful to moral conscience, <em>keeping our word</em>, and standing up for what we believe... to be “whole” so that <strong>what we say</strong> and do in different situations is <strong>consistent</strong>... Integrity is ... <strong>telling the truth to oneself</strong>’</td>
<td>We can be trusted to be <strong>honest</strong> and truthful, to <strong>say</strong> what we mean and to <strong>do what we say</strong>. <strong>All</strong> our work will be characterised by the following values</td>
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<td><strong>9. Gratitude</strong></td>
<td>Honourable Purpose</td>
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<td>‘Gratitude is often described as the secret of a happy life. It reminds us that we all drink from wells we did not dig. It moves us to <strong>count our everyday blessings</strong>’</td>
<td>We aim to be <strong>positive in everything</strong>, doing what is good and aiming to benefit others as well as ourselves.</td>
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<td><strong>10. Humility</strong></td>
<td>Humility</td>
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<td>‘Humility enables us to <strong>take responsibility</strong> for our faults and failings (rather than blaming someone else), <strong>apologize</strong> for them, and seek to make amends’</td>
<td>We seek to do our personal best without bragging and to encourage others to achieve their best <strong>without being critical</strong> or jealous of their efforts. <strong>Accountability</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>We recognise that having the freedom to express ourselves means we must also <strong>accept responsibility</strong> for <strong>our words</strong>, thoughts and actions.</td>
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**FOR PARENTS:** How can I foster these values in my children at home through my parenting? Which do I need to work on most with which of my children? Which are my priority? How can I support the teaching my child receives at school? How do I live out these values as a parent?
Teachers, Core Values and Character Education

Research has shown that 'staff involvement and commitment to character education is critical to effective implementation' for 'if staff do not understand the initiative, they will likely implement it ineffectively or reject it for the wrong reasons' (Berkowitz and Bier, 2004, p. 75). In 2012, when surveyed, 99% of staff endorsed and subscribed to the Core Values of Trinity and 99% either agreed or strongly agreed that, 'Here whole school values are explicit and the kids know what they are'.

I was at (the previous school) before transition and continued in my role in the new school...I think prior to the Academy, I mean there wasn’t .... the ethos wasn’t as specific, it wasn’t as clear. Having those core values at least makes people...not just the students but also the staff as well...think about what they are doing and how they actually fit in with those values......they’re there all the time

(English teacher)

I’m not saying for a second that the (predecessor) school had no values, 100% not saying that, but they were in no way explicit or... you couldn’t have asked a pupil at (the predecessor) school ‘What are this school’s values?’ and have got an answer with any degree of certainty... here they’re explicit and the kids know what the values are ... it’s reiterated in assemblies, you know, during assemblies it’s linked to themes, they’re given the little cards ... the independent learning centre down there... they’re emblazoned across the glass ... the kids just know what they are ... it is through the system and through assemblies ...but I think staff probably use the values with the kids as well without actually realising they’re doing it.

(Geography teacher)

In an interview, the then Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning at Trinity Academy, Dr Julie McConigle, explained how the staff became envisioned and the emphasis on putting the core values into operation:

We brought the values card to the staff at the first whole staff meeting ...We went to a hotel in Doncaster and painted a vision based on the values card... it was fascinating because people were genuinely challenged about their own life... you had people walking away from that weekend going ‘Oh I’ve given up cigarettes... I’m going on a diet’... And people genuinely were discussing amongst themselves. I mean one guy said ‘Oh I’ve just had a son, and to be presented with a kind of set of core values it gives me hope that I have something on which to base my parenting’. And so this was like a real challenge to people’s own identity...
Learning, Core Values and Character Education

At Trinity Academy character education appears to be pervasive and is a concomitant of its ethos. From studying a Shakespeare play to finding out examination results or playing rugby, from discussing vandalism in a local park to looking at historical source images on the slave trade, students were observed being prompted to apply their understanding of their school's core values in their studies. The following extracts from lessons serve to illustrate:

History Lesson on Slavery

Teacher:

When you look at what you see on the screen and when you see these sources try and just imagine if that was you... just try and put yourself in that position as if it was you... Now then, what we're going to try and focus on as we do this is to try and ultimately look at some of the things that we obviously hold very dear to ourselves in the school we work in and the school we are in and that is some of the core values. And what I've tried to do, to try and narrow it down for you, is pick three of what I would consider to be the most relevant core values that we try and look at day by day in the work we do and how it applies to what we are going to look at today... I don't think there's a better example of anything so far we've done in our history course this year... The first one is the honourable purpose, right? You've got to think to yourself if that was you, are the actions that you're taking part in, are they in some way benefiting other people or would they be benefiting others around that particular area... straight away with slavery, this word of compassion - are you caring for other people, are you thinking of other people and giving them your best interests and best thoughts of care, and just looking after their best interests when they're having times of difficulty, right? The final one is this idea of integrity. Are the people that are doing these things (what you're seeing in the sources) ...are they honest? Is what they're doing honest? Are their intentions honest? I've done enough talking...

English – A lesson on Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing

In this lesson the English teacher encourages students to undertake a character analysis task employing the students' understanding of the school's Core Values as a frame. This use of the core values as a framework would not occur in every lesson (I observed this teacher making no reference to core values on two previous occasions when teaching writing to persuade and writing to explain). But the fact that the school's Core Values are discussed in English at all would seem to be innovative practice, especially in the UK.

Teacher:

Think about our core values because we've been looking at all the different qualities of these characters. Think about the core values that we at Trinity live by or try to live by. I want you please to write down which core value you think Beatrice and Benedick either embody or break. Okay, what do I mean by embody?
Student:
Stick to

Teacher:
Stick to – so which one do they either stick to or break? And I’d like a brief explanation. You’ve got 3 minutes to do that…
Which of the core values?...
(Children discuss task)

Teacher:
Just bob your pens down for me please. Very quickly, hands up if you have a core value that you think Beatrice embodies? Sarah?

Sarah:
Determination

Teacher:
Why determination?

Sarah:
Cos um she stands up for what she believes in like when Hero is getting um slandered and like the shame of it, she believes him

Teacher:
Good yeah determination – could also be seen as courage. How about a core value that she breaks? Anyone got a core value that she breaks? Chris?

Chris:
Humility

Teacher:
Why humility?

Chris:
She can be quite boastful

Teacher:
She can be quite boastful, I do agree. Very quickly, has anyone got a core value that Benedick embodies?

Jo:
Courage because he fought in a war

Teacher:
Absolutely courage because he fought in a war and the big one, the one that he breaks?

Gary:
Integrity

Teacher:
Why Integrity?

Gary:
Because he lies about his feelings towards Beatrice
PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics) lesson

Dr Pike:

OK, so PTE...do you think you've covered the whole school values or have you heard them mentioned in PTE?

Aaron:

Yeah that’s the main part of it where we hear them mentioned.

Sam:

That’s the base of it really.

Dr Pike:

The whole school values are really covered in PTE?

Sam:

Yeah.

Dr Pike:

Tell me a bit about that.

Sam:

Well we’ve studied Bible and like we’ve only done… tiny bits, so doing the Bible like the core values and that come up a lot in the Bible so we see them a lot. And like last year when we did the story of Ruth our teacher told us how it fits into core values.

Dr Pike:

And can you explain to me how the story of Ruth makes sense of the whole school values?

Sam:

She had courage to leave her home and town and she was determined to go with her step-mum and like make it work and that.

Dr Pike:

OK, anybody else on whole school values in PTE?

Hayley:

We do it in Expressive Arts.

Dr Pike:

Really? Tell me about that.

According to most Sixth Formers, Core Values explicitly came into their PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics) lessons. This would seem to confirm Aaron’s view in the conversation above when he states, ‘that’s the main part (PTE) of it where we hear them mentioned’. Yet the real figures might be far higher when one considers that students are not always aware of how value-laden lessons are, especially if the term ‘Core Values’ is not explicitly mentioned.

FOR TEACHERS: Which Core Values do you address in your classroom? Try to match particular core values to specific topics, tasks, texts, lessons that you teach. How could Core Values inform your teaching even more?
The Judeo-Christian Sources of Trinity’s Values

When the Principal of Trinity Academy met a group of 14-year-olds (he was answering any questions from one tutor group per day), one student asked: ‘Who actually started the core values?’ Mr Ian Brew’s answer illustrates the level of honesty regarding sources of values:

Who actually thought of the core values? ... The way we did it was we sat down and we thought ‘Well what do we want Trinity to look like?’

...we mean Trinity as a school and a school is people, right, it’s us, it’s who we are, it’s our attitudes, it’s our outlooks, it’s our behaviours, it’s our priorities. So we thought, ‘Well what do we want the people to look like, what do we want Trinity to look like?’ and in the end we said ‘Well we want it to look like the best person looks like’... And so we thought, ‘Well who’s the best person who ever lived?’ and we thought ‘Jesus Christ is the best person who ever lived. Well how was he the best? ... Well he put other people first, so that’s humility. He overcame all the big challenges in his life with determination and courage, and whatever he did he did for the right reasons within honourable purpose. He was compassionate to people around him even when they let him down he was compassionate’. So that’s where those core values came from.

Evidently ‘Jesus Christ is the model for human virtues within the Christian faith community’ (Arthur, 2003, p. 56). Trinity’s Principal is deliberately open with parents and students about the source of the values. Describing a meeting for prospective parents, he explained:

I say to the parents when they come and I put the values up. “Do you want to send your child here? These are our values.” Because they say, “Oh, they’re great, humility, compassion, all good things.” And I say, “We’re a Christian ethos academy. We find them perfectly in Jesus Christ. That’s why they’re our values.”

The enthusiasm of parents for the school is worth noting when one considers that most of Trinity’s parents are not weekly churchgoers. Recently, when parents returned significantly more questionnaires than might have been expected (880 for a school role of 1330) prior to an Ofsted inspection, they indicated a high level of satisfaction with the work of the academy in all of the areas upon which they were asked to express a view. Overall, Trinity was judged to be ‘outstanding’ in terms of its effectiveness (Ofsted, 2011, p.4) and it has been suggested that schools with a Christian ethos are ‘particularly effective with more socially disadvantaged pupils and, as such, appear to offer much to the common good of society’ (Morris, 2005, p. 311).

Christian-ethos schools, such as Trinity Academy, have the belief or ‘faith’ needed to transform expectations, raise attainment and provide the quality character education that underpins academic achievement. Believing that each and every child, regardless of ability or background, is ‘made in God’s
image' provides a powerful incentive to see children as individuals rather than as 'grade raw material' or mere statistics and generates high expectations. Believing that children and young people have astonishing potential, regardless of where they live or the educational attainment of their parents or community, derive from this traditional Christian belief which 'trumps' or overrides low expectations anyone might have based on socio-economic status or previous underperformance. All the Principals and Vice-Principals of schools belonging to the Emmanuel Schools Foundation agreed with the statement: 'Every individual amongst our student body is created in God’s image'. This explains the high aspirations these leaders have for their students.

As you will see from the DVD enclosed with this pack, many students at Trinity Academy are the first in their family to have the opportunity to go to University. Believing that young people are 'made in God's image' has contributed to unusually high expectations of students both academically and in terms of their character. At Trinity Academy very high aspirations for students and an unshakable belief that they could excel at school was noted. The Christian-ethos and core values of Trinity Academy are widely regarded within the school (among all staff, regardless of faith) to be the foundation for its transformation.

This 'faith in students' within the ESF schools would appear to create an extraordinarily positive atmosphere where success and high levels of achievement are fully expected. This belief underpins not only the perception that all children are gifted and talented but that they need to be cared for and respected and that they are capable of high standards of responsible behaviour (as Mr Brew says on the DVD).

The belief that children are 'made in God's image' but have that image tarnished and are capable of wrongdoing seems to lead to the need for good order. Mr Brew believes that as human beings we only achieve our potential when provided with clear boundaries that help us to be our best. All the ESF schools visited demonstrated high levels of calm, order, courtesy and respect and all achieved excellent academic standards. Within the ESF schools the emphasis upon good standards of behaviour and a strong work ethic has Christian roots.
Freedom and Social Justice

At these schools, Christian foundations benefit everyone. A historical parallel would be William Wilberforce, once MP for Hull, whose evangelical Christian beliefs underpinned the fight he led for the abolition of slavery. Not everyone who benefited from the abolition of slavery shared Wilberforce’s faith or his beliefs. Yet his motivation to see slaves freed was derived directly from his Christianity. If human beings are made in God’s image they should be treated decently and respected not seen as property and enslaved. This was a matter of social justice.

The social justice issue today is that children from the least affluent areas should not end up with the poorest education and least well-paid jobs. It should not be those children whose parents can afford to live in the most affluent areas that get the best education.

When students at Trinity gain five or more GCSE A*–C grades especially when they include English and mathematics (this has now more than tripled and is above 60%) and make ‘exceptional progress’ (Ofsted, 2011, p.4) they are liberated to achieve a better future in life. This is about social justice.

Freedom to Think

Freedom to think is evident in the position outlined in the academy prospectus that states:

We have a Christian ethos which means that faith and belief are important and we encourage students to think for themselves about the big questions of life

Weekly school assemblies stimulate the engagement with the ‘big questions’ of life. The time (2 hours per week) and high profile devoted to a subject such as Philosophy, Theology and Ethics, which encourage students to explore and debate worldviews, demonstrate the commitment of Trinity to encouraging students to think critically. In addition, assemblies prompt students to consider truth claims and the basis of such claims. The Principal explained:

My assemblies are littered with the phrases “This is what I believe, it’s up to you as to what you think”, ‘I suggest this to you’, ‘Christians believe’… I don’t say to people: ‘This is it, you’d better believe me or else’; I say, ‘There’s a lot of views out there. This is mine’.

Trinity Academy acknowledges and respects the Judeo-Christian tradition as a source of shared values for everyone although it does not seek to impose the religious truth claims of Christianity on anyone. This distinction is important. As the data from Trinity Academy demonstrates, people often have different justifications for the same values. Not all are as clear about their sources.
Popular Endorsement of Trinity Academy

A diverse group of individuals certainly endorse and subscribe to the Core Values at Trinity Academy even though they do not always claim to share the same sources for those values as the school’s Principal. One teacher, who had transferred from the previous school, illustrated this rather well in an interview and told me:

I mean I am not a Christian but I can subscribe to those values because they are just humanitarian I suppose basically, and if you’re a decent human being you would share those core values anyway.

The possibility of having a Christian foundation or starting point while respecting diversity is sometimes doubted. Yet the ‘Trinity experience’ may prove illuminating in this regard. How young people understand and interpret their school’s ethos and its values is important in terms of their autonomy. It is intellectually honest for those who see the core values as ‘Christian’ to acknowledge this. In group interviews I asked 14-year-olds if Trinity Academy’s Core Values were, in some sense, Christian. One Year 9 group’s response will illustrate:

Dr Pike:
OK, are those Christian values?

Lauren:
No, just every life values.

Dr Pike:
Let’s just go round, you can all tell me what you think. We’ll start here and work our way down. Are those Christian values?

Sam:
Yeah but you know like they’re values that a lot of people hold in lots of different religions as well, it’s like it’s not just the Christian values because it’s common sense really about the values that a lot of people hold because it’s right to hold them.

Dr Pike:
OK

Daisy:
They’re not just Christian values because if you think about it it’s just what a normal everyday person should be like, so you should be accountable to other people and you should be like determined and have courage, so it’s just every day....

Dr Pike:
Are those Christian values or not, what do you think?

Peter:
Well a bit, yeah. Just a bit, I don’t know.
Audrey:

I don’t think we are because whether you are a Christian or whether you aren’t a Christian they’re still very good like values to follow. Like you’ve got to have determination to do things and courage to do things, and just because you’re not a Christian it doesn’t mean that you don’t need determination and you don’t need courage.

Dr Pike:

OK.

Daisy:

I think they’re just every day things that you need to do.

In 2012, 97% of Sixth Form students at Trinity Academy agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘Whether you are a Christian or you aren’t, the schools’ Core Values are still very good values to follow’.
Teaching Character and Core Values

Yet character education, that helps children acquire certain values and virtues, is sometimes viewed with suspicion. Some people, mistakenly, think it is indoctrination and an infringement of children’s rights. Yet nine out of ten Sixth Formers at Trinity would be pleased if the Core Values became their character traits. Some parents and teachers even feel uncomfortable when it comes to teaching children how to live and feel nervous about teaching moral values. Yet all parenting and schooling seeks to change children in specific ways.

The curriculum and the processes and procedures of schools, all communicate powerful messages to children about what is worth worshipping and what is worthless, what is more valuable and what is less valuable. The question is not whether we teach children how to live but how we will do so and what values we will teach. We need to be aware that advertisers and celebrities all influence children and persuade them to buy certain products or to live a certain way.

Some Christians may also have concerns that character education places too great an emphasis upon good works rather than God’s free grace. Yet there is a significant difference between being a Christian and being of good character. While the life, work, ministry and teaching of Christ may have influenced the values of many schools (including those that do not have an explicitly Christian ethos), adopting those values cannot, according to New Testament teaching, make one a Christian. Indeed, there are many Christians who would not want children attending Christian-ethos schools to assume they were practicing Christians if they adhere to the ‘core values’ of their school.

Equally, combining moral clarity and action can do wonders to aid reflection. C.S. Lewis suggests that if one makes ‘some serious attempt to practise the Christian virtues’ over a six-week period then, ‘one will have discovered some truths about oneself’ (Lewis 1943, p. 57) and observes that, ‘No one knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good’ (Lewis 1943, p. 58). Character education that encourages children to try to be good can help them appreciate some truths about themselves but we should not confuse character with Christianity.
References


http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_reports/download/(id)/133593/(as)/135007_364041.pdf


The Research

The UK's ESRC/AHRC Religion and Society Programme and the School of Education at the University of Leeds funded the original research project (AH/F007981/1 - £52,595) led by Dr Mark Pike. The Project sought to evaluate how well young people were prepared for life and work in five schools, three of which belonged to the ESF. The main case study school, at which Dr Pike spent 3 weeks, was Trinity Academy. Fieldwork (lesson observation and recording, interviews with leaders, teachers, parents and students as well as surveys) was carried out, followed by an anonymous, quantitative survey of over a thousand participants (leaders, teachers and 14-year-old students) in the schools. A dissemination conference was held at the University of Leeds on October 21st 2008. Research findings were also presented in 2008 at the US Character Education Partnership national conference in Washington DC; at the Association for Moral Education conference at Notre Dame University and at the BERA (British Education Research Association) conference at Warwick University in 2009. Findings were disseminated in articles published in the Oxford Review of Education, Management in Education, Journal of Research in Character Education and the Journal of Beliefs and Values. Follow-On funding from the AHRC (£32,400) was awarded for 2011-12 and provided the unique opportunity to re-engage with students in Year 13 (aged 18) who took part in the original research in 2008 when they were in Year 9 (aged 14) and to hold 'impact' events (on 2nd and 9th May 2012 at Trinity Academy) to disseminate the findings from the original research to school leaders, teachers and parents.

Some Findings from the Research

Spring Term 2012 – Year 13’s views

(these are the first students to graduate from Trinity Academy as they began in Year 7 in 2005 when the Academy opened)

Raising aspirations and expectations

'Trinity Academy has raised my expectations of what I am capable of’

8 out of 10 students agreed

MY PARENTS DID NOT ATTEND UNIVERSITY BUT I EXPECT TO ATTEND UNIVERSITY’

6 out of 10 students agreed
Core Values and Character

'The Core Values make me think about how I should act'

8 out of 10 students agreed

 WHETHER you are a Christian or you aren't, the school's Core Values are still very good values to follow

9 out of 10 students agreed

'I would be pleased if the Core Values became character traits of mine'

9 out of 10 students agreed

Tolerance

'I respect people who have different opinions and beliefs to me''

10 out of 10 students agreed

PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics)

'Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important'

8 out of 10 students agreed

'It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in'

9 out of 10 students agreed
Focus Groups

What follows are transcripts of focus groups with Sixth Formers conducted in February 2012. Over 60% of sixth form students at Trinity expect to attend University even though their parents did not go to University. Others have secured apprenticeships and employment. You are invited to ‘listen in’ on extracts from the conversations I had with three groups of Sixth Formers.

YEAR 13 – TRINITY FOCUS GROUP 1
6th FEB 2012

Can you just introduce yourselves please?

My name is … I’m from Stainforth and I’ve been at the Trinity Academy since Year 7. Hopefully I’ll be going to university in either Aberdeen or Coventry to do economics. I’m … I live in Thorne, I’ve been here since year 7 and I’ve got a place at Cambridge to study English. I’m … I live in Thorne, I’ve been here since year 7 and I want to go to Leeds University to do maths. I’m …, I’ve been here since year 7, I live in Thorne and I’ve also got a place at Cambridge to study English. I’m …, I live in Thorne, I’ve been at Trinity since year 7 and I’m hopefully going to go to Northumbria or York to study history.

Can you give your experience of Trinity a rating from 1-10 where 10 is excellent and 1 is terrible?

10/10; 10/10 or a 9/10; 9 or 10; 9 or 10; 8 or 9.

Why are you giving such high scores? Why was it such a positive experience?

Personally I think it’s a great school, it’s not just the students around you that make it a good school, it’s the staff and the actual facilities. To be able to come into a school with such great facilities from year 7 is quite wow – as soon as you walk in. I think since Year 7 it’s just got better and better for me.

I think the teachers are great – the leadership style of the leaders in the school – they are very driven for success and I don’t think they are too pushy. I think that they allow you to do your personal best and their guidance is very good.

Similarly to…, I live in Thorne and obviously Thorne isn’t a particularly nice area… but I do find that Trinity has changed a lot of the kids. I’d say that there’s not as much anti-social behaviour anyway and I just think that it really changed attitudes of people. I don’t know if it’s the Christian values or anything but it’s just more – you can tell as people go through school you get used to it… I just think it’s fantastic. You can be whoever you want to be, you can be bright, you can have access to everything and you’re not judged and you’re not particularly bullied… I just find that I’ve been very happy here.
I think the staff and the way they teach you is quite good. They treat everyone equally so that's quite good and if there are any problems in school or out of school they try their best to try and solve it for you.

I think it's strong in terms of ethos – they state quite clearly to everyone who joins what they expect of the students and what the students can expect of them and the kinds of things to follow like the core values. By having some kind of structure and essence of punctuality in place you kind of have guidance and you know where you're going; you know that you feel safe here because they've obviously got all these things in place so it makes you feel like it's structured. You've got lots of potential to be whatever you can here.

I think the school is a brilliant school to be in. It's a great place to learn. All the teachers are really friendly and really supportive – you can go up to them and you can talk them about work or anything else that you need to talk them about. I think the rules of the school are brilliant because they've changed so many people to aspire to greater things other than just to go on the dole and doss around. I love the school.

I want to pick up on something you just said – to aspire to greater things. Can you say something about the student perspective on the school raising aspirations?

As I said earlier I've got an offer from Cambridge and that's something quite huge coming from around here because I don't think anyone has been in about 30 years to Oxbridge... As soon as I came to Trinity the way they set out the gifted and talented programmes and allowed you to go on trips to universities and go to visits where you can really interact with people and do things that let you realise that you want to do this and they make it almost seem very plausible and they don't cut you down and say that you can't do that... they really are genuinely enthusiastic to help you no matter what you want to do which inspires you. So to say that someone from Thorne and with our background because we are first generation university students and no one in our family have been to university or done A Levels.

Our parents left school when they were 16 and my dad is a police officer and my mum is a registrar of births, deaths and marriages. They like the fact that we have been offered opportunities to go beyond what anyone ever thought. We were influenced by the amount of trips we've been on and we just generally get taught that you can do whatever you want to do and I've always felt that. You can do whatever you want to because of that.

Similarly my parents and pretty much all my family, well none of my family have been to University. My dad works in a glass company and he has worked in glass for I think about 25 years. My mum is an IT Technician ... I know that I don't want to have to work 12 hour shifts and things like that. I want to get better and I think when my mum decided to let me come to Trinity she knew from the core values when we first started that they set things in place and they knew that the school offer you a lot more and I think that the teachers and the staff as they said, they push you... you want to go on to further education and I want to make something of my life. ... I think the school says that it's your life and go and live it to the fullest and I think this school has offered us a lot of opportunities. The teachers don't hold you back and say that whatever you want to be if you work you will get there, no matter what. They will push and push and maybe if someone is struggling there is always someone there who is behind you to say go on, keep going, you're going somewhere. I think they just push you a lot
and it's not that you don't want to do something and they're pushing you to do something that you don't want to do, their guiding you into areas where before you would never explore because you think I'm only from Thorne or I'm only from Stainforth

My mum is a full time carer for my sister and my dad can't work through illness so they both left school at 14 so they haven't really got an education to support me so I find the school's values good because there is always someone at school to help you with things and with your education. There is always someone to push you forward and support you with everything you do.

Both my parents left school at around 16 – my mum is now an LSA and as soon as my dad left school he joined the RAF... None of them went to university

Social mobility [going further than your parents] is appalling in this country compared to other countries... Any reflections about social mobility?

That's what I said earlier about certain mentalities of the area it is, with certain people, there is this mentality about going on the dole and things like that and I just think that here [at Trinity] it shows you a different world... my parents felt like they were never told anything. My dad said that he felt that he was never told about the outside world and it was very much that you leave school and get a job and live in the same area and get married and have children, that sort of thing. Here it just feels like you get taught that you can do whatever you want to just so long as you work hard obviously, it's not just handed to you on a plate.

You see people walking around... I mean when you see people walking around in tracksuits and you think I can do better than that and you feel you can coming here. They teach you more things to aim for and give you more goals in life.

In every aspect as well they teach you, in sport you can succeed, it's all different subjects it's not just in academic subjects, it's in everything so you feel like you can succeed in everything.

But it's not in an arrogant sense or in a pretentious sense where you think that you are better than someone else.

I think it's about trying to change the mentality of that just because your parents did something that we should be penalised or we should just accept or resign to the fact that that's what our life is going to amount to... I think it's what areas like this need.

Did you enter in September 2005?

Yes.

In that year 34% of Year 11 students got GCSEs with Grade C or above and I think last year it was 97% ...what changes have you seen? Can you start by thinking about Year 7 and what it was like?

I think now people are more accepting of the rules but when we first came, because people had been at [the predecessor school]. After a week they thought it would be more laid back
and they'd be able to get away with things but because they [the school leaders and teachers] persisted with the rules; people learned that you can't cross the boundaries.

You remember the year 11's as being hardcore and thinking they were going to break the rules and they tried and tried... It's quite amusing to remember – they didn’t win.

I think when it [Trinity] first opened people just said things like they were leaving because of the rules and once we get in and they see how naughty we are they will just lay off us and they won't be able to handle us – they will give in to us because that is what they were used to, but they were knocked back. I think that ever since the school has opened the rules have been set in stone and they've never moved.

I think there is consistency in the rules and I think that is essential. Mr Brew doesn’t waver on his views and he sticks to it and he makes that known. He does it in a very reasonable way but in a sense nobody questions it…. but people understand and realise that you can’t away with previous behaviour that was pretty disgusting.

I do think if Mr. Brew hadn't had been as consistent they would have crumbled and it's because of strong, consistent leaders that have made it work.

The school has core values and a Christian ethos – what does that mean to you... in your experience of school?

I think they're really important. Not everyone has to be a Christian. The misconception of other people about this school is that they ram religion down your throat and everyone has got to be a Christian and it's not. Christian values are traditional and when you go right back, every single religion – not just Christianity, have all got certain rules that are set in place which structure society.

It's more ethics.

Yes ethics and in a sense people do believe and have misconceptions that you have to be a Christian but you don't. It's more to give you a sense of right and wrong and society's expectations... morals is not to go out and murder people.

It's only to make us better people.

I think about the values and the Christian ethos, they're more life values and skills for life. Things like determination in a job; if you're not determined to do the job then you going to be in the job long are you? You're not going to be able to sustain family life and jobs and things like that. I think the values that are set in place are not initially for Christians they are just general values that can apply to everybody in the right kind of way.

No matter what book of life, no matter what faith or religion, it's just general things to give you morals ... Britain is traditionally meant to be a Christian-based society.

I like the values and ethos. I agree with the Christian ethos and the core values because it gives some basis on how you should act in public and treat other people but again, like she said, it's not at all forcing you to change your religion and become a Christian or be devout to Christianity; it's giving you the fundamentals in life just to support people and teaches you
how to talk to people and how to interact with people and not to be bigheaded and just
general decency towards everybody in terms of having the ability to go out in the world and
accept other people's views... With the core values and ethos you are able to respect
everybody else's views ... but not necessarily be a Christian.

It opens your mind a bit more.

It teaches you to look at the bigger picture instead of just how things affect you, you can see
how it affects everybody else around you as well.

YEAR 13 – TRINITY FOCUS GROUP 2
6th FEB 2012

Introductions:

I come from Swinefleet... I joined in the sixth form. ... I'm from Thorne and I've been here
since year 7. My name is... I'm also from Thorne and I've been here since year 7. My name
is.... I'm from Thorne and I've also been here since year 7. I'm..., I'm from Thorne and I've
been here since year 7.

Can you give your experience of Trinity a rating from 1-10 where 10 is excellent and 1 is terrible?

7/10; 8 or 9/10; 8 or 9; 9 bordering on 10; 9-9.5/10; 9/10.

I've given it my score and it's very positive because I'm comparing it to my experiences at my
previous school and I think in comparison in every aspect Trinity is better in terms of teaching,
discipline, the actual staff. It's all just better and seems more professional and more effective.
I did my GCSEs at my old school. I've not done A Levels anywhere else so I can't make that
comparison but generally I can compare and it's better here.

Why did you choose Trinity?

I just heard positive things about it though hearsay and I think one thing that definitely stuck
out was the discipline that it gives you with wearing the suits and it just seems very good
overall and seems more proficient and professional. Other sixth form colleges let you just
walk and leave whenever you want but here you're definitely part of the system. This place
is also good for getting good results.

Well I've given it a 9 because I'd like to think that Trinity has helped mould me into the person
I am. With the core values I think it's very much set in place to bring the best out of people
and to bring out the good qualities in people and help you have a better understanding of the
people around you as well, by doing different things like going to South Africa, going on tour
trips and things like that. I also chose it from previous experiences from being in different
institutions and I thought that the lack of discipline that I'd had at my other place left me
feeling that I wanted to build it back up and develop it and I thought that this was definitely
the place that I could do it. Other sixth form colleges do give you more freedom than they do here but I thought that wasn't what I needed. Wearing suits makes you feel part of it all – I know that individuality is good but I think it makes you feel part of something.

**Was it the right decision?**

Absolutely I think it was.

**What's the plan for the next thing you want to do?**

Go to Sheffield University to study sociology. I've got to get 280 points.

I came in September 2005 and started in year 7 and it was a good experience. In retrospect, thinking back, the way that we were brought up through Trinity compared with how the Year 11's had been brought up through the [predecessor] school...

**Why were you so positive with your score?**

I think it's because the school has given us a lot of opportunities to do things and bring out our character and the best out of us. So we've had the chance to go to South Africa and we've had the chance to go to Cambodia and Uganda and it's things like that, life changing experiences, that sort of build you as a person and I think that this school is helping to do that everywhere and in every aspect of the school. I think it sets the foundations for a very positive life and things that you can do if you stand by the school's core values of courage and determination and honourable purpose etc.

The score I gave was 8-9 but I am bordering more to the 9 side. Personally when I first arrived in year 7, in the first year I did struggle but in Year 8 onwards the staff provided a lot of support. You can always go to them if you're struggling so they do help you if things aren't going right – especially in sixth form, the teachers are very driven to come and help you if you are struggling and they'll stay behind if you need to so that you feel like you can work with them more.

When I first arrived in year 7, like ... said, it took a while to get used to it and I remember thinking all the rules and things were put in place, I remember thinking why is this, for example, the uniform; but now I've experienced it all I do think that uniform was a good idea because I think like I said, it makes you feel part of something and everyone is the same. I think it's very smart and I think it's a good thing to have and growing up, you do see the difference. You think that when you were younger that you don't need it and you wonder why and you want to rebel against it and things like that but as you get older you don't. The staff as well, I was going to say that the staff were all really helpful and I think as well, when you get into the sixth form, it's more of a professional environment and you are treated more like an adult I think. Obviously within reason there are obviously things that you still can't do but you are treated a lot more like an adult.

7/10. Yes, I gave it that score because as everyone has already mentioned, the behaviour of the students and what is expected, they have high expectations and because of that they usually get the results.
Can everybody tell me what your plan is for life after Trinity?

I want to study Law at University and at the moment I’ve had five conditionals and my first choice is Leeds.

There’s Leeds, Manchester, Manchester Met, Kingston and then Reading but I was only looking at Leeds and Manchester. I need three A’s to get into Leeds but I also have an access offer which means I can also get an A and two B’s and then a pass into the access school.

I’m going to study Japanese and I’ve also applied to Leeds and got an access offer for two B’s and a C and a pass. I’ve also applied to Newcastle, Sheffield, East Anglia... I’m hoping to go to Leeds. I’m going to open days next month

Firstly I’m wanting to go to University … and study Business and IT Management. I’ve had four conditional offers and I’m waiting for my fifth from Sheffield Hallam, but my firm choice is York St John’s...

The ‘outstanding’ Ofsted report talked about raising aspirations and said this Academy is good at raising aspirations...

Well I am the first in my family to even apply for university and to go and study Law as well. I come from a very modest background and my parents earn a modest living; they don’t have a very good education … they’ve obviously just got normal jobs so really I’m the only one to go into further education and it is a lot due to Trinity Academy because you feel that you are just expected to go and get a modest job and stay in Thorne in Doncaster or a similar area, but Trinity has shown me that I don’t have to do that – I can achieve higher than what society expects from you and I think that has come from having this school and their high aspirations. They expect a lot from you and because of that you expect a lot from yourself.

I’m again the first in my immediate family to apply to university and obviously, even if they were, they probably wouldn’t have studied Japanese but I think if I hadn’t have come to Trinity I might not have even been applying for Japanese because it was a teacher here that went to Leeds University as well, and she did French and Japanese, and she helped me to develop it and she is doing a tutoring session with me. So if it wasn’t for coming here I’d be doing something totally different. I did have an interest in it so it has helped me with confidence and to carry on with it. I’m looking into teaching or interpreting or something like that.

Again, neither of my parents went into further education and I am the first in my family to apply to university. In terms of Trinity they do start off at an early age to help you open your eyes to what you can achieve in the world, they do push you to get good exam results and things like that. They help you with your firm choices so starting off with in Year 9 they will have careers fairs just to help you realise what is out there in the outside world and what you can achieve.

In terms of aspirations, I was at ... and I’m not saying that they didn’t believe in the pupils but they just sort of got them through the school and sent them on their way. They weren’t really too bothered, it was like, just sit your GCSEs and then just leave sort of thing. So when I came out of that… I was thinking of just joining the army or something like that – joining one of the forces, but then after being here for a bit I thought maybe I should consider university and I got into Sociology.
So what do your parents say about you going to University?

My parents are extremely proud – I think they tell everyone!

My parents are the same – my dad will tell everyone at work that I’m going to university – yes, they’re really proud because I’ve got five conditional offers so they are really proud of that.

My parents are very proud but I think like most parents they just want what is best for their son or daughter so to see them going into further education and opening up to achieve something different that they didn’t achieve, I think that is really fulfilling for them as well.

YEAR 13 – TRINITY FOCUS GROUP 3
6 FEB 2012

Introductions:

I’m from Hatfield and I’ve been here since Year 9. I was at [previous school] before I came here. I came here because it was easier to get to and I heard it was a good education. I’m ... from Thorne and I’ve been here for seven Years, since Year 7. I’m ..., I’m from Thorne and I’ve been here since Year 7. I’m ... and I’ve been here since Year 7 and I’m from Hatfield. I’m ..., I’m from Thorne and I’ve been here since Year 7. I’m ... I’m from Thorne and I’ve been here since Year 7.

Can you give your experience of Trinity a rating from 1-10 where 10 is excellent and 1 is terrible?

8 or 9; 7 or 8; 8/10; 8/10; 8/10; 8/10.

I’ve gave my score because I think there’s a lot of support and I think that if I’d have gone to another school I don’t think I’d have done as well as I’ve done here.

I think that the teachers and the support staff at Trinity push you to do your work whereas other colleges just let you get on with it and even if you get stuck you know you can get help because the teachers encourage you more.

I think there is good support here and you get a good education. I didn’t give it a ten because I didn’t think that anywhere can be completely perfect and every school does have its flaws or problems.

It’s an engaging learning experience so because it’s engaging you take in the information than if you’re just given a text books and made to write notes out of it.

The lessons are planned better and the teachers put a lot more effort into the lessons and doing well for the students than a lot of other schools would do where they would just turn up and say do this exercise...

The lessons are always structured no matter what lesson it is and who the teacher is. There is always some sort of structure to it and if you get stuck you can always go for help from teachers and things.
What’s your life plan for life after Trinity – what is the next stage?

To join the navy hopefully.

University – I’m thinking at the moment either Lincoln or Sheffield for nursing

I’m going to either Northumbria or Hull to study politics.

I’m going to university – I’ve applied to 5 universities but my first choice is East Anglia to study environmental geography.

I would like to go to the University of Lincoln to study Business Management but if that’s not successful then to join the police force.

I’d to go university, either Leeds or … to study Chinese and English. I’d like to study Chinese because I have an interest in cultures. My parents didn’t go to university … My mum’s a foster carer and my dad looks after mentally ill people.

Why do you think that’s the case around here?

I don’t think they had the opportunity to go because [the predecessor school] wasn’t very good … compared to here so we’ve got a better chance of getting there.

It’s because of the sixth form as well because at [the predecessor school] there wasn’t really a sixth form with Trinity students whereas now you’re looking at Trinity and there are about 200 in the sixth form so there are a lot more wanting to go … to university.

For the first few Years there were only 70 students in the sixth form and now there are over 200.

I’m the first in my family to go to university completely as none of my family has been before.

Was there a particular point when you thought about raising your aspirations?

In Year 11 as I was approaching my GCSEs I thought that I had to up my game now and actually pull my GCSEs up….I think for myself it was in Year 9… I think before I had an interest in working with animals and it wasn’t very good pay… so I decided to stay in the sixth form rather than go to college because I thought that getting more A Levels in a few different subjects would mean I could do something different with my life so if I changed my mind and didn’t want to do that anymore then there would be something to fall back on. In the sixth form I started to enjoy studying and I realised that I didn’t really want to aim low; I wanted to aim higher and try harder.

Who or what encouraged you to aim higher?

I think I just, with the help of the teachers, I think I found myself. I don’t think there was any inspiration it was just being here and being in a good school and having the opportunity to work individually, I found what I wanted to do.
I would say that as I got grades back and feedback from teachers it made me think that I can do better than what I'd aimed for before so the more I've kept on going it's made me work harder so then I thought actually I can do a better job.

**Do you still have the same view of the core values as you did in Year 9?**

I think I have, yes.... I think they should be taught them sooner in my opinion. I think they should be put through primary school and I think Trinity would achieve even higher if they did. ... I think teaching them from a younger age would further develop their grades... It's the Christian ethos... They're not only Christian ideals – they're general. If you gave the core values to people in the street and asked if this was a good way to live they'd say yes because they are just ideas that are accepted by society reality.
A Comparison of Trinity Students’ Views in Year 9 (aged 14 in 2008) with their views in Year 13 (aged 18 in 2012)

q_a_Y9 I think this school is very good

84.8 %Agree
15.2 %Disagree

Q14_Y13 I think this school is very good

90.2 %Agree
9.8 %Disagree

q_e_Y9 Whether you are a Christian or you aren’t, the school’s Core Values are still very good values to follow

74.7 %Agree
25.2 %Disagree

Q4_Y13 Whether you are a Christian or you aren’t, the school’s Core Values are still very good values to follow

91.6 %Agree
8.4 %Disagree
q_u_Y9 Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important

Q20_Y13 Matters of faith are important, matters of what I believe or don't believe to be true are important

q_d_Y9 Teachers want us to respect other people, other people's views

Q3_Y13 Teachers want us to respect other people, other people’s views.

q_t_Y9 It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in

Q19_Y13 It's my personal opinion what I actually want to believe in and what I want to have faith in
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