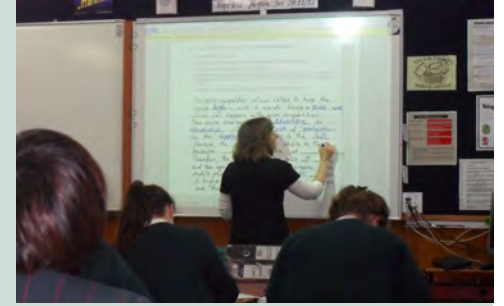




FPC

Foundational
Principles
for Curricula



The Foundational Principles for Curricula (FPC) emerged from a long-felt need within the school for a comprehensive statement that summarises Biblical principles to provide broad parameters for teaching in all subjects and at all levels across the school, and also provides a 'yardstick' by which current and future curricula influences can be appraised.

As such, the FPC was intended to be a reference document for thinking about all aspects of curriculum design, planning, delivery and evaluation. The writers had a good working knowledge of the history and culture of Middleton Grange School as well as wider educational theory and practice, both within New Zealand and overseas.

In the period since it was first written (2004), the FPC has also provided a practical framework for conducting reviews in various subject areas and at different levels of the school. Being an integrated (Special Character) school, Middleton Grange has been well served by the FPC. It has proved to be a helpful document for discerning the philosophy of the New Zealand Curriculum and its implications, as well as keeping alive the founders' vision for 'Biblically based teaching in the Christian faith and a first rate general education'.

In 1964, the founders of Middleton Grange School expressed their vision to provide for “a school, undenominational in character,” whose mission was “at one and the same time, to provide Biblically based teaching in the Christian faith and a first rate general education¹.”

Neither the vision nor the mission has changed. Both are overarching and eternal in purpose; and, being an integrated Christian School, they are upheld in a fiduciary manner by the Christian Schools’ Trust, the Board of Trustees and the staff of Middleton Grange.

Therefore, the school reaffirmed the original intention of its founders in the 1995 vision statement:

Middleton Grange School assists families in the education of their children by providing an environment in which the Biblical truths of Jesus Christ are taught and lived.

We see here that the school exists to “assist families” by providing an approach to teaching and learning which honours God, but neither displaces nor replaces the Biblical instruction, precept and example that should

¹ Dunlop, E. (1989). *The Middleton Grange Story*. Dunedin: John McIndoe Ltd. 16.

be present in the home. The school is in partnership with parents.

Additionally, the school’s task is the formal² education of its pupils, and this education should be “first rate”, i.e., of the highest standard and excellence; anything less is neither God-honouring nor

responsible stewardship of the gifts and talents of each pupil. The issue is not essentially one of cognitive ability, which will naturally vary from pupil to pupil, but a disposition towards achievement—My utmost for His Highest³.

Any curriculum review necessarily focuses on the taught curriculum. However, it also impinges on all activity within a school across all levels.

In the light of the founders’ vision, certain criteria emerge and serve as guidelines for a review. They derive from the need to “provide Biblically based teaching in the Christian faith.”

² Formal here means that demanded by the compulsory curriculum.

³ Oswald Chambers. 1874-1917.



They also flow out of the obligation placed upon the school community to provide “a first rate general education”.

We would, therefore, conduct a curriculum review by asking whether teaching, content and school activities aim to achieve Biblically based teaching in the Christian Faith and a first rate general education.

“Biblically based teaching in the Christian faith”

Our curriculum and everything pertaining to it should be enlivened by the beliefs that make up our Credal Statement⁴.

The Credal Statement is Biblically based; it summarises and interprets the Biblical story.

The first article in the statement, which speaks of “The unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead,” might seem alien to our curriculum and the running of the school, but it is not; while an

4 Dunlop, E. (1989). *The Middleton Grange Story*. Dunedin: John McIndoe Ltd. 147. See p10 'The statement of Belief (Credal Statement)

evangelical emphasis on the Second Person of the Trinity (the Lord Jesus Christ) is essential and rightly commonplace in Christian schools, it cannot be at the expense of an equal emphasis upon the First and Third Persons of the Trinity (the Father and Holy Spirit). Scripture is infused with Trinitarian interrelationship and accountability:



Jesus did not do His own will, but that of the Father; and, the Holy Spirit came as the Counsellor on Jesus’ instruction to ensure believers would never be without His presence, despite the Ascension. And yet the co-essential and co-existent essence and ministry of the Godhead is known and understood only in part and remains a mystery of Glory.

This is foundational theology in a Christian school, because within the mystery of the plurality of the Trinity lies the deepest possible understanding of relational wholeness and community. Moreover, in practical terms we have a precedent for authority; accountability; discipline; submission; respect; and

1. The existence of God

order in school society, academic work and even artistic endeavour. In essence, the life of the Trinity needs to permeate the life of the school; and it will have the character of love.

The second, fourth and fifth articles of Middleton Grange School's Credo Statement also inform our curriculum review. They speak of God; God in Creation; human fallenness; redemption in Christ; and final judgement. Each of these intimations must test our curriculum.

To speak of God, in the Christian sense, is to speak of something more than creation. It is to posit the existence of a personal Creator. It is to look further than secular curricula, which are bounded by materialism⁵, and to emphasise an immaterial, metaphysical⁶ reality. It is to beg questions, and through the special revelation of Scripture, to grapple with answers that have ontological⁷ and ethical⁸ implications. So, too, any account of life that does not link life directly to the Logos⁹ is deficient.

Likewise, a curriculum that does not give weight to the full stature of humanity, to the breathtaking significance of one made in

⁵ The material world is defined by the five senses (perception) and by time and space.

⁶ Literally beyond the senses.

⁷ The nature of being – asking the question: Who am I?

⁸ How we should behave.

⁹ Christ, the unchanging word.

2. Man is made in the image of God

the image of God, is equally diminished. The qualitative dimension to being made in the image of God must be dwelt upon: the human capacity to know good and to choose to do it (our moral nature and conscience); our ability to plan for the future; our capacity for observation and reason, for creativity and for the use of language; our emotional range; our being male or female; and the deep want of God planted within us, together with our vocation to love God and know Him forever, beg for consideration. So, too, the relational significance of being made in the image of God must be emphasised. The dignity of marriage, family and even life in the school proceeds from the character of God and is found among those who bear His image.

This is the case with stewardship, also. Where we govern or “steward” our resources prudently, whether it is in the context of the home, the government of any organisation, or

3. Our moral responsibility

4. Man's ability to think, plan, be creative and communicate

5. Relationships

6. Stewardship

the workplace, or where we develop and sustain the physical and mental resources God has given us, or when we wisely manage the resources of the natural world, we do well: we are faithful to our calling as people made in the image of God. Curricula that treat humans in only naturalistic¹⁰ and utilitarian¹¹ terms are grievously inadequate and genuinely hopeless. In contrast, curricula that always see “human being” in relation to God, and most clearly expressed in Christ, provide an unsurpassable basis for compassion, true fraternity¹² and moral conduct.

7. The fall of man

Additionally, curricula that fail to take seriously the depth of sin in the individual, and the consequences of sin at a personal and social level, run the risk of doing pupils and New Zealand society the greatest possible disservice. Curricula which are only therapeutic, pandering to pupil potential and self-maximisation, and which never mention the

¹⁰ Man is purely physical and does not have soul or spirit.

¹¹ Something is of value because it produces something, or has a practical use. This is the opposite of the Christian view of the intrinsic value and dignity of the human person..

¹² Brotherhood and sisterhood.

human capacity for selfishness, deception and violence, and which describe human fall-
eness, sin and even evil as impersonal and as mostly the result of economic, political or societal failure, are trivial and reductionist. Our curricula cannot be so: they must bear the imprimatur¹³ of Scripture and the awful revelation of the cross.

Just as an understanding and an acknowledgement of sin as the scourge of humanity are necessary, so, too, our curricula must explore redemption. While they might note, comparatively, religious and political systems that appear to offer social, personal and even spiritual redemption, they must eventually focus on Jesus Christ and His regency in the Kingdom of God. To do otherwise is to fail the school and its pupils, and to be false to the testimony of history. The uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Son of God, together with His sacrificial death as our representative and substitute, speak decisively on human depravity and the character of God. They indict, too, religious and ethical relativism¹⁴.

Plain confidence in the gospel, then, is not

¹³ The mark of absolute authority.

¹⁴ No fixed or permanent standard.

8. Redemption through Christ

9. Eternal consequences of what we are teaching

an exercise in the imposition of personal preferences upon pupils; rather it is truth to them.

Curricula must also consider the implications of final judgement. Understandably and very correctly, the New Zealand Curriculum concentrates on present needs with respect to science, sociology, technology, literacy and numeracy. As with other curricula, it prepares pupils for life. The Middleton Grange School curriculum, however, should also prepare pupils for death. It must have, so to speak, an ultimate future focus—and one that looks to resurrection. For a life lived without thought of Christ will be no life at all. And a life that is consumed with self-gratification, or sensuality, or a lack of virtue will be without final reward. Therefore, should the school curriculum fail to communicate to pupils that their lives and actions have everlasting consequences, and that death and then judgement are the destiny of us all, it will itself be found wanting.

“A first rate general education”

Our curriculum thus soundly anchored in

Biblical truth should also aspire in its content to the highest standard of excellence.

Turning to the founders’ mission to secure for its school’s pupils “a first rate general education”, it should immediately be noted that a first rate education per se will be a Biblically based education, or, expressed another way: that there is no authentic education¹⁵ that is not Biblically based education. This is the case because the theological underpinnings of a Biblically based education address reality. With regards to the nature of reality, Biblically based education holds that the material universe is not in itself total reality; rather, reality has a metaphysical dimension to it, and that as a whole, it is circumscribed by God.

A Biblically based education also resolves through its soteriology¹⁶ the ancient dilemma of *being*

¹⁵ An education that fully attends to the human condition.

¹⁶ The study of the need for personal salvation.



10. Being and becoming who you are in Christ

11. Unity and diversity

and *becoming*, or of *actuality* and *potentiality*. The Christian is both being and becoming; Christian salvation is presently experienced, but it has future consummation. Such an assertion stands against the open flux of contemporary thought with its consequent and experimental lifestyles. It echoes the Pauline and early catechumenical¹⁷ exhortation: “Become who you are in Christ.”

Biblically based education, too, with its profound grounding in Trinitarian theology, makes sensible the otherwise overwhelmingly problematic tension between unity and diversity; between one and many, between singularity and plurality. It properly orders diversity and so prevents chaos¹⁸. These distinctions are important because secular curricula, trapped in naturalism, cannot reliably comment on metaphysical issues, and therefore, finally, neither are they able to answer issues of life and death; of, for example perplexing issues, such as

¹⁷ The word comes from the underground caves (houses) where early Roman Christians gave instruction.

¹⁸ For example the individual Christian only reaches completion as part of the body of believers.

euthanasia, youth suicide, human embryo research and abortion. Middleton Grange School’s curricula will actively critique the thinking behind the New Zealand Curriculum and encourage scholarship which is both broader and deeper. It will provoke questions, rouse thought and answer to the desire for God within each of us.

Moreover, secular curricula are in crisis because relativism has evacuated their traditional content. There is a lack of confidence in the moral relevance and theological significance of, for example, syntax and the role of punctuation; or, indeed, the vital pursuit of accurate representation and its relation to truth—this not only in languages, but in science, art and mathematics. Relativism in secular curricula has led the nation to moral indecisiveness, aesthetic confusion and to an intellectual dead end. A first rate general education holds as vital the pursuit of accurate representation and its relation to truth in the languages of all disciplines.

A first rate general education will not only meet national curriculum requirements but surpass them. Grounded in special revelation

12. Truth & order

(Scripture), but not ignorant of general revelation (creation), it will hold to objective reality, truth, goodness, ordered liberty and beauty; and it will work with them. In secular curricula, objectivity is seen as a less and less credible concept. Truth, particularly in the humanities, is held to be subjective. This has meant that opinion and preference have come to play a role for which they are unfit. So nationally Social Studies, English and in some cases religious education, have lost confidence when it comes to speaking about the value of one culture or form of government



over and against another, or one work of art or piece of literature in relation to another, or of Christianity over Islam, or of intelligent design in the face of evolutionary theory, etc. Middleton Grange School's curricula should not be paralysed by such foolishness. The school's programmes and curriculum delivery have been sensitive to and diligent in these issues, but there is a need for continuing vigilance.

A first rate general education will take great care when it comes to history. On a personal, local, ecclesiastical, national and international level, history records change and continuity. In this way, it is vital for self-understanding, and for gaining a comprehensive view of New Zealand and other societies. Moreover, history has teleological, soteriological and eschatological¹⁹ import; history attends to purpose, regeneration and hope. In short, it speaks of God's faithfulness. History is not only "the heart of the humanities", it is also the context in which we form all our understanding of God's purposes, revelations and relationships. As such, history must occupy a pivotal place in the curriculum of the Christian school.

Similarly, geography, the study of human interaction with the environment and each other, is critical to a proper understanding of stewardship and the care of creation. As time is to history, so place is to geography; both

¹⁹ Teleology considers causes and purposes of human action. Soteriology considers Christian salvation. Eschatology considers the last days and Christ's return.

13.
**Encouraging
Biblical virtues**

locate us. The centrality of place is always affirmed in Scripture and it is imbued with the formation of human identity and the memory of curse and blessing.

A first rate general education will also attend to virtue. While secular curricula focus on a foppish set of jejune²⁰ ‘values’²¹, Middleton Grange School, in contrast, will actively seek to draw out of its pupils virtues common to humanity and particular to the Christian. Virtues include the capacity for mercy, compassion, courage, courtesy, fairness, faith, gratitude, hope, humility, love, magnanimity, obedience, patience, prudence, respect, self-sacrifice, temperance and truthfulness. Just as in His light we see light, so it is that through His life the staff and pupils of the school can hope for virtue. Indeed, the vision of Middleton Grange School is wholly characterised by the distinctive Christian virtues of servant leadership and servanthood.

²⁰ A Fop is a Middle English word meaning ‘superficial appearances’ while jejune means ‘barren and dull’.

²¹ Values are not permanent; they may be individual and private or formed by agreement within a group.

So then, a curriculum review will be conducted with reference to the mission of the founders of Middleton Grange School to “at one and the same time,” provide “Biblically based teaching in the Christian faith and a first rate general education.” A review will:

- Test current curricula to see whether they are expansive enough in vision and whether they introduce, or reinforce, the basic but boundlessly significant precepts of the school’s Credal Statement.
- At every turn our curriculum will be expected to depict reality as it is described in Scripture. It will distinguish between Creator and creation; it will speak of the grandeur but sinfulness of the individual; and, it will testify to Christian redemption and future hope.
- The curriculum will necessarily be seamless.

Our curriculum will be expected to offer a first rate general education, too. It will deal to everything obligatory within the New Zealand Curriculum; however, it will not be limited by it. Science, for example,



will not be bound by naturalism; nor will health and physical education excise the immaterial part of human existence from a discussion of “well-being”; and art will consider aesthetics from a Trinitarian and Logocentric perspective.

Furthermore, Middleton Grange School’s curriculum review will be governed by the Biblical principle of *stewardship*. It will recognise that all teachers and pupils have particular aptitudes, abilities and skills, and it will work with these to make sure that teachers are working where they might best serve the pupils of the school, and where pupils are best placed to excel in their gifting. Attention will also be given to the use of physical resources.

Additionally, the curriculum review will at every opportunity look to further Christian character. It will attest to the evidence of history that knowledge without virtue is ruinous; that peaceful society and the generation of wealth require goodness. Further, it will work on the premise that Christian virtue is a commanding testimony as to the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit and a witness

to the more general character of the Kingdom of God—something prized by the School’s founders and central to their vision.

Finally, a curriculum review will be conducted with *confidence* and with *joy*. As Middleton Grange School draws inspiration for its curriculum from Scripture, it can reckon on delivering a comprehensive education to its pupils—indeed, one that opens the heart, soul and mind.

References

- Dunlop, E. (1989). *The Middleton Grange Story*. Dunedin: John McIndoe Ltd. 16.
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Statement of Belief *Credal Statement*

- 1. The unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead.**
- 2. The Sovereignty of God in creation, revelation, redemption and final judgement.**
- 3. The divine inspiration and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture, as originally given, and its supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.**
- 4. The universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the fall, rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation.**
- 5. Redemption from the guilt, penalty, pollution and power of sin only through the sacrificial death (as our Representative and Substitute) of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God.**
- 6. The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, His ascension, His mediatorial work and His personal return in power and glory.**
- 7. The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to make the death of Christ effective to the individual sinner, granting him repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ.**
- 8. The indwelling and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in the believer.**
- 9. The one holy, universal church, which is the Body of Christ, to which all true believers belong and in which they are united through the Spirit.**
- 10. The resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.**

Supplement

EPC
Application for
Curriculum
Planning & Classroom Delivery

1. The existence of God (p3)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God is spirit; He is eternal. Through Him and by Him all things are made. Nothing exists without Him. He continues to sustain His creation. He is above and over His creation, yet He is intimately involved

with every aspect of it. By the work of His Spirit He calls individuals to know Him personally through knowing His Son Who is revealed in the Bible.

For those who know God, there is purpose, direction and hope. Knowing God enlightens mankind's ability to understand God's creation and takes him beyond the

physical to the spiritual, providing a basis for addressing the issues of life and death.

Those who do not acknowledge the God of the Bible still benefit from the goodness of God through His common grace to Mankind. However, their understanding of the issues of life and death is distorted and without hope.

Key Principles

1. God is.

- a. He is the one and only true living God
- b. He is omni-present
- c. He is omniscient
- d. He is omnipotent

2. He reveals Himself to mankind

- a. through creation
- b. through His Word
- c. through His Son
- d. through history

3. He continues to work in individuals through His Holy Spirit.

1. God is everywhere ('omni-present'), all-knowing ('omniscient') and all-powerful ('omnipotent').

- What are the implications of God's omni-presence, omniscience and omnipotence?
- What are the attributes of God?
- Why do we need to know God?
- How can we increase our knowledge of God?
- What are the reasons for not acknowledging God?
- What are the implications of not acknowledging God?

2. God wants all to come to a saving knowledge of Him.

- How does God reveal Himself through creation?
- What evidence is there for created order?
- Who is Christ and what was His purpose in becoming man?
- What is the Bible?
- What relevance does the Bible have in our lives?
- How do we ensure there is good systematic Biblical knowledge?
- What is history?
- What can we learn about God and man through a study of history?

3. The Holy Spirit works in individuals to bring about spiritual growth.

- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- How does the Holy Spirit produce spiritual growth in us?
- What do we need to do to grow spiritually?
- How does God speak to us? How do we listen? How do we respond?
- What is a conscience?
- How can we show the fruits of the spirit?

2. Man is made in the image of God (p3)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God through the Scriptures makes it very clear that He created man in His own image. Man is the climax of God's creative activity; man was His crowning work and

He abundantly blessed His creation.

The Christian has confidence and joy in relationship with his Creator. He believes this relationship lasts forever.

A non-Christian is also made in God's image. While he may be able to live a happy and productive life, he does not

have the joy of a relationship with his Creator or the hope of eternal salvation.

Key Principles

1. Each individual is made in the image of God.

2. Mankind was created for fellowship with God.

3. Mankind is God's crowning work.

- a. God breathed life into Man.
- b. God gave Mankind dominion over all of His creation.

1. Since man is made in God's image every human being is worthy of honour and respect.

- What does being made in the image of God mean?
- How do we acknowledge the sanctity and dignity of human life?
- How is honour and respect shown to others?
- How do we love, value and serve others in society?

2. 'Fellowship' means loving God and enjoying Him forever.

- How do we love God?
- What does it mean to enjoy God?

3. Man is mind, body, soul and spirit.

- Why is it significant that God breathed life into Adam?
- How does this elevate mankind above the rest of creation?
- How does this enhance our ability to appreciate God's creation?

3. Our moral responsibility (p3)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God is holy and without sin. When He created man He lavished him with every gift, including conscience. Man's rebellion

against God when he succumbed to temptation has resulted in a distorted understanding of right and wrong.

For the Christian, morality is defined by reference to God's standards as declared in His Word. Christians understand that

their actions have eternal consequences.

Non-Christians still acknowledge that man is capable of moral and ethical choices for good or evil and that the choices they make have consequences.

Key Principles

1. God is good

- a. His ways are perfect and his laws are just.
- b. He cannot look upon sin.

2. God holds individuals responsible for their moral and ethical actions and choices.

- a. Although mankind is fallen, individuals have the capacity to know moral and ethical good and to choose to do it.
- b. The choices individuals make have consequences now and for eternity.

1. Everything God created was good, including man.

- What were God's purposes for man?
- How do we know that God was good?
- What was man like prior to the fall?
- Why did God give man free will?
- What happened when man ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

2. Giving man free will was part of God's plan.

- Why do we have a responsibility to choose to do good?
- How do we learn the difference between right and wrong?
- What is a conscience?
- What can we do when we are asked to act in a way which goes against our conscience?
- Are there absolutes in right and wrong?
- How does the indwelling of the Holy Spirit influence believers' choices?
- What responsibility does free will bring?

4. Man's ability to think, plan, be creative and communicate (p3)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

As image bearers, individuals are endowed with the ability to use their minds and their creativity to communicate their love for God, and to grow in their knowledge, enjoyment and understanding of Him. Man's enjoyment of learning, thinking

and exploring is reflective of God's character planted within him. Man has an intrinsic desire and ability to develop and initiate new things in this world that God has made and beyond for the benefit of mankind.

Throughout his life, the Christian should be refining, developing and enjoying the ability to use language, creativity,

discernment and reason according to the measure of his God-given talents.

Because of the Fall, mankind's motivation for using these abilities may be for reasons other than to bring glory to God or to benefit mankind.

Key Principles

1. God reveals Himself through his creation.

- a. It is inclusive of beginnings and endings and is ordered.
- b. It expresses infinite variety.

2. Mankind's capacity to communicate reflects God's desire and design for fellowship with Him and others.

3. God created us with the ability to think and reason.

- a. God requires individuals to make wise choices about the use of their abilities.
- b. Individuals and communities are called to make choices and plan according to His will and purposes.

4. Though in a fallen state, as His image bearers, mankind shares His creative attributes.

- a. Mankind's creativity is for God's glory and for the benefit of others.
- b. Mankind's differences are celebrated when individuals
 - i. use their gifts and abilities
 - ii. enjoy others' gifts and abilities
 - iii. work together in community

1. How does God reveal himself in creation?

- What do we learn about His character through what we see of Him in creation?
- How did God reveal himself in the beginning?
- How is He likely to reveal himself in the end?
- What examples of 'infinite variety' are there?

2. The ability to use and manipulate language is distinctive to man.

- In what ways does God communicate with man individually and collectively?
- In what ways does man communicate with God and with others?

3. How can we develop our mind and therefore the ability to think and reason?

- What defines 'wise' in terms of choices and decisions?
- How do we discover and then develop our abilities?

4. Man cannot create out of nothing but rather uses what is available in creative ways.

- What are creative attributes?
- How has man's creativity benefited man in the past, present and future?
- How is 'benefit' defined?
- What moral and ethical issues are raised in light of man's creativity?
- Where is the balance between an individual's creative or intellectual Freedom and community responsibility?

5. Relationships (p3)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God's plan for all of creation is worked out through relationships. Right relationships with others and the natural world

are established through right relationships with God.

For the Christian, this will recognise the need for reconciliation with God and will encompass an appreciation of the on-going presence of God changing and

refining the individual's ability to relate.

In the absence of a right relationship with God, applying Biblical principles of relationship will still benefit the individual and mankind.

Key Principles

1. The triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) exists in perfect relationship.

- a. There is proper order and function in relationship.

2. All people are made in the image of God.

- a. Each person has intrinsic value and is unique.

3. As a result of the fall, sin has corrupted relationships.

- a. Mankind is in need of reconciliation with God and one another.
- b. God reconciles individuals to Himself through the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. God communicates with His creation.

- a. God has created mankind to be relational.
- b. Individuals have the ability, the need, and the responsibility to communicate with God and one another.

1. A 'perfect relationship' is one that is totally harmonious, always in accord, works together and is never broken, without detracting from individual function and character.

- How is the Trinity in perfect relationship?
- How did Jesus relate to others during His earthly ministry?
- What guidelines does the Bible provide for human relationships?
- What are the outcomes for following / not following those guidelines?

2. Being 'made in the image of God' is not to be gods ourselves.

- What does it mean to be made in God's image?
- What are the implications of this for all of our relationships?

3. 'Corrupt' is anything less than the Trinity's perfect model. 'Sin' is rebellion against God; it is any attempt to work out one's life outside of a perfect relationship.

- How has sin corrupted our relationship a) with God b) with one another?
- What is reconciliation?
- What aspects of reconciliation are on-going?
- How is this achieved a) toward God b) toward one another?

4. God communicates with individuals by the Holy Spirit, either directly, through His Word, or through creation.

- How has / does God initiate communication/
- How do we communicate with God?
- Why do we communicate with God?
- What does God want us to communicate to others

6. Stewardship (p3)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

As image-bearers, we do well when we are faithful to God's mandate to wisely manage the resources, gifts and talents He has given us in creation.

The motivation for stewardship may be

different for various groups of people. For Christians, it is an expression of love for our Creator and wonder for His creation

For the Christian, stewardship of spiritual, mental and physical resources permeates every aspect of life. To do this, pupils must have an ever deepening knowledge of God's original purpose and design.

When the motivation is not from one of love for God, applying biblical principles of stewardship will still benefit mankind. History demonstrates that purely naturalistic or utilitarian solutions, even with the best of intentions, in the end will result in chaos.

Key Principles

- 1. God created everything good and for a purpose.**
 - 2. God has given dominion of creation to mankind.**
 - a. God has given individual and corporate abilities to rule over creation.
 - b. Mankind's ability to rule has been corrupted by the Fall.
 - 3. God continues to sustain His creation in implementing His sovereign plan.**
- 1. The Biblical term 'good' means: 'perfectly suited for the purpose for which it was created'.**
 - What are God's purposes?
 - How does creation support God's purposes?
 - 2. 'Dominion' means: 'authority, rule'.**
 - How is dominion exercised over creation?
 - How should this be practised a) individually? b) corporately?
 - How has mankind abused, failed or ignored his role of dominion?
 - What are the consequences of mankind's abusing, failing or ignoring his role of dominion?
 - 3. The Biblical term sustains means: 'holds it together'.**
 - In what ways does God sustain His creation?
 - What is His sovereign plan?
 - How is He implementing His plan?
 - What is our part in implementing His plan?

7. The fall of man (p4)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God created mankind in right relationship with Him. Adam's rebellion resulted in mankind's on-going separation from God. God took the initiative to restore right relationship between Him and mankind.

The Christian understands the root

causes of societal ills to be sin and seeks to respond from a biblical perspective when looking for solutions to the issues of society. Any attempt to fix problems without identifying the sinful motivations is doomed to fail. As Christians respond to God's grace in salvation by accepting the atoning death of Christ, repenting from sin, and living in obedience to His Word,

they become salt and light, with the potential to transform society.

Where this response is absent, the individual still needs to be confronted with the Truth of mankind's sinfulness and God's plan for redemption, and to understand the implications of ignoring this.

Key Principles

1. God created all things good, thoroughly suited to their purpose.

- a. Mankind was originally created good.

2. Mankind is fallen.

- a. Individuals are born sinful in every aspect of their being.
- b. Man's sinfulness is the root of all societal ills.

3. God's judgement on the fall of Mankind has affected every aspect of creation.

4. God is implementing His plan of redemption for mankind and creation.

1. Adam's 'goodness' recognises that he was not born sinful but chose to become sinful when he foolishly exercised his free will in disobedience to God.

- What was God's original purpose for mankind?
- How has mankind's sinfulness affected this purpose?
- How is free will exercised correctly?

2. Through Adam's original sin, fallenness has been transferred to the whole of mankind, who is born sinful and continues to sin.

- What was the nature of Adam's sin?
- What were the consequences of sin for the individual, and for mankind's relationship with God? with others?
- What is the difference between being born sinful and choosing daily to sin?
- How is sin reflected in a) human behaviour b) society c) social Institutions.

3. How has God's judgement affected every aspect of creation?

4. The Biblical term 'redemption' means to buy back.

- What is God's plan of redemption?
- Who or what is being redeemed?
- What is the individual's responsibility in this redemption?
- How does this restore God's original relationship with mankind?
- How does this provide hope for a) mankind, b) the individual, c) creation?

8. Redemption through Christ (p4)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God created mankind for fellowship with Him. Because of Adam's disobedience, this fellowship was broken. Restoration is initiated by God. Only conviction by the Holy Spirit of the need for redemption

can lead to restoration of the relationship that was broken. Individuals cannot secure their own redemption through good works, but must make a response to God's provision of salvation through Jesus Christ.

A positive response to God's provision not only secures salvation but also

begins a life-long process of renewal. For redeemed people the Holy Spirit provides the inspiration and motivation to challenge and change society in line with God's wider plan for His creation.

A negative response to God's provision sentences the individual to eternal separation from God.

Key Principles

- 1. God is Holy.**
 - 2. Mankind is fallen.**
 - 3. God desires to restore relationship with all of mankind.**
 - There is a need for atonement.
 - God's plan of salvation is from before the foundation of the world.
 - 4. Redemption is through Christ alone.**
 - Christ is unique as the incarnate Son of God.
 - Faith in Christ is the only means of individual salvation.
 - Salvation will lead to good works.
 - 5. Redemption leads to change.**
 - Individuals are being transformed into the likeness of Christ.
 - Personal and corporate responsibility is to challenge and change society.
- 1. 'Holy' means completely set apart from sin, unable to sin or to look upon sin.**
 - What are the implications for the individual of God's holiness?
 - 2. 'Fallen' means to have descended into a state of sinfulness.**
 - What caused Mankind to fall into sinfulness?
 - What choices does Mankind have in this state?
 - How can we be holy as commanded by God?
 - 3. Restoration is God's initiative but is inseparable from atonement.**
 - What is atonement?
 - How was this achieved?
 - How does atonement open the way for redemption and restoration?
 - What is the outcome of an individual's redemption a) for the individual b) for society?
 - 4. 'Redemption' means to purchase back.**
 - Why can an individual not redeem himself?
 - 5. Salvation is an on-going process.**
 - What is Christ like?
 - How do we differ in character from Christ?
 - How do we become like Christ?
 - What difference should this transformation make to the individual's interactions in and with society?

9. Eternal consequences of what we are teaching (p5)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God's purposes for mankind are everlasting. Death is not the end. Where the individual spends eternity is dependent on their response to God's plan for their redemption. The response they make while

on earth will be confirmed for eternity by God's judgement after death. God alone has the right to judge and will always do so justly.

For the Christian the matter of eternal destination is settled, but each individual will be held accountable for the way in which they have lived their life according

to God's Truth.

For the non-Christian, while the temporal consequences of their actions may benefit society, when placed in an eternal context, the individual will be found wanting at the final judgement.

Key Principles

1. God is eternal and so are His purposes.

- a. God created man with a soul that will live forever.

2. Humanity faces two horizons: the temporal and the everlasting.

- a. God has ordained resurrection of all people.
- b. The individual's choices in this life have both temporal and everlasting consequences.

3. Each individual will stand before God and be judged by Him.

1. 'Eternal' means having no beginning and no end. 'Everlasting' means beginning at a point in time and lasting forevermore.

- What are God's purposes for mankind?
- How do we know where we will spend eternity?

2. 'Temporal' means for as long as this earth lasts; fixed in place and time.

- What does it mean to be 'resurrected'?
- Why should we think about eternity now?
- How should we set our priorities within an eternal perspective?
- How do our actions now affect this life and the life to come?

3. One day every person will recognise and acknowledge God's authority.

- What will God be judging?
- When will this happen?
- How can we prepare for this judgement?

10. Being and becoming who you are in Christ (p5)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

Man searches within himself and through his experiences to discover who he is and yet scripture states clearly who, and on what basis, he is.

For the redeemed there is a tension in the statement, 'Become who you are in Christ'. In one sense redeemed man is complete in Christ through His work on the cross. In another sense an individual must work to become more Christ-like. The loving response to his Redeemer is

to live a life obedient to Him, which is the working out of his faith.

For the unredeemed, while they can become people of significance and influence in this life through character and works, their eternity is without hope.

Key Principles

1. God is Truth.

2. Salvation is complete, assured and on-going.

3. An individual's potential is in knowing who they are in Christ.

- a. Humans cannot become as gods.

4. An individual's purpose is defined by God.

- a. He equips us for that purpose.
- b. Responding to the will of God leads to maturing in Christ.

1. God has revealed His truth in Christ and in His inspired Word.

- What does the Bible say about who we are?
- What does the Bible say about where we come from?
- What does the Bible say about our purpose?

2. 'Complete and assured' refers to salvation being sufficient in Christ and there is no more to be added to the work of the cross.

- 'Ongoing' refers to the notion of an individual 'working out' their salvation.
- What is 'salvation'?
- How does an individual become 'saved'?
- In what ways does salvation change a man's position before God?
- What does 'working out' mean in practical terms?

3. 'Potential' refers to realising God's plan and purpose in an individual's life.

- What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ?
- What does the Bible say about those who are not 'in Christ'?
- How can an individual grow towards their 'full potential'?
- What are the limits to an individual's potential?
- What does the Bible say about an individual's purpose?

4. How does God equip individuals?

- How does each individual set of gifts or talents contribute to the functioning of the body of Christ?
- How can an individual discover their particular gifts and talents?
- What responsibility does an individual have to develop and use their gifts and talents?
- What does 'maturing in Christ' look like?

11. Unity and diversity (p6)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

Creation is an expression of the creative character of the living God. Through such diversity we see expressions of the depth and richness of the Creator. We see reason for perfect balance in combining

differences into a whole. Hence the analogy of the parts of the body being distinct yet one.

For the Christian this implies a delicate balance between standing firmly on and for the Truths and principles of God's Word, acknowledging every individual as an image-bearer and loving their

neighbour regardless of differences.

The challenge for both Christian and non-Christian in a fallen world is to learn how to balance the need to be together and live in community with our uniqueness and our differences.

Key Principles

- 1. The Trinity is one in essence and purpose.**
- 2. The Trinity is diverse in manifestation, function and authority.**
- 3. All mankind is created equal.**
 - Value is based on being created in God's image.
- 4. Human diversity within God's design is to be celebrated.**
 - All God-given gifts and abilities need to be nurtured.
 - Unity is the product of loving God.
- 5. God has created a universe of complementary diversity.**
 - This diversity falls under God's authority.
 - There is purpose in this diversity.

1. The Trinity is a perfect example of unity and diversity in harmonious and balanced relationship. 'Essence' is the essential components or ingredients of. 'Purpose' is the common goal, aim or plan.

- What is meant by the unity of the Trinity?
- What is meant by the diversity of the Trinity?
- How is the Trinity harmonious and balanced?

2. 'Manifestation' is how a person presents himself. 'Function' is the role he performs. 'Authority' is his mandate to act.

- How does each member of the Trinity manifest Himself?
- What is the function of each member of the Trinity?
- How does authority operate between each member of the Trinity?
- How should this understanding affect our interactions with a) God b) those who are different from us c) those who are in authority over us?
- What difference does position, circumstance or action make to our value?

3. 'Equal' here refers to an individual's value before God.

- What is an individual's value before God?
- How can we see that we are created in God's image?
- How should this understanding affect our interactions with a) God b) those who are different from us c) those who are in authority over us?
- What difference does position, circumstance or action make to our value?
- What effect does becoming a Christian have on our value?

4. & 5. 'Diversity' means the combination of conditions and qualities that make each individual unique.

- Why does God make us different?
- Why is diversity valuable?
- What is a correct understanding of diversity? Of unity?
- How do we celebrate our own and others' diversity?
- How do we nurture our own and others' diversity?
- What forms of diversity or unity are not acceptable?
- What does God-given unity look like?
- How do we achieve unity out of diversity?

12. Truth & order (p6)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God is an everlasting unchanging God, perfect in all His ways. God's revelation, through creation and His Word, is an expression of His being and in this we can see order not chaos, we can see truth as opposed to relativism. Even in apparent chaos there is an order; in apparent contradiction there is truth. The challenge to living in a fallen world is to search for truth and order.

'Truth' refers to the laws which God has established i.e. physical, moral and spiritual laws. These are absolute. Scripture deals clearly with many issues of morality and living. A Christian response to these is one of obedience or disobedience to the stated will of God.

There are many issues in life where Scripture does not comment specifically. What is beneficial for one may not be beneficial for another. A Christian's response to these is to seek the principles of

Scripture and apply these in faith to their own life being aware that God looks on and works in the heart of a man.

Order is an outworking of truth. God has established order within the physical, moral and spiritual laws. The challenge for mankind is to discover, explore and work within the order of God's truth. Mankind co-operates with the Creator as he follows the created order. When mankind ignores the laws God has established, he reaps the consequences.

Key Principles

1. God is Truth.

- a. God reveals this Truth to mankind.
- b. Truth is immutable.
- c. Truth can be resisted.
- d. Individuals need to handle the Truth correctly.

2. God is a God of order.

- a. Mankind exists within the framework of this order

1. Truth refers to the laws which God has established i.e. physical, moral and spiritual laws. 'Immutable' means unchangeable.

- What is truth?
- How is truth revealed? How do we know truth?
- How and why is truth resisted?
- What are the consequences of resisting truth?
- What is relativism?
- What is the implication of absolute truth and how does this apply to the community? The individual?
- What is the appropriate response when different groups apply the truth differently?
- What role does motive play in the application of truth?
- How is faith an aspect of truth?

2. Order is an outworking of truth.

- How does God's order operate within the various categories of laws?
- In what ways is there order in apparent chaos?
- What are the consequences of resisting order?
- What is our responsibility in discovering order?

13. Encouraging Biblical virtues (p7)

Suggested Foci

Statement of Essence

God's creative design is that His character is reflected as virtues in mankind through the way individuals respond towards each other in every situation. These are referred

to as universal virtues, grounded in Scripture and relevant to all cultures, communities and peoples. These virtues are modelled perfectly by His Son, Jesus Christ.

For the Christian, the Holy Spirit working within an individual's life enables him to become more Christ-like and to

manifest and grow these virtues in his life.

For the non Christian, when these universal virtues are applied in community, individuals and communities are able to live in harmony and in right relationship.

Key Principles

1. All Biblical virtues have their origin in God.

- a. These are demonstrated perfectly in the life of Christ.
- b. These are stated in the Scriptures.

2. Mankind is required to be like Christ.

1. Virtues are aspects of the character of God that man is able to reflect. True virtues are eternal and absolute.

- What is virtue?
- What are the virtues?
- What is the difference between virtues and values?
- How do we 'grow' virtues?
- How do we grow and mature in our understanding of virtues and their application?
- How are virtues manifested perfectly in Christ?

2. What does it mean to be 'like Christ'?

- Why are we required to be like Christ?
- How can an individual demonstrate Christ-like virtues?
- How can a community demonstrate Christ-like virtues?
- What is the effect of an individual not living out the virtues?
- What is the effect in the community where virtues are not applied, or are interpreted loosely?