



Spring Valley Christian School, Kendal.

Nestling in the Windermere countryside is a little jewel which is currently one of the north-west's best kept secrets. It's not some new gastro-pub opened by yet another celebrity chef, nor is it likely to be found in the pages of Country Life, at least not for a while. It is one of the newest additions to the CST family.

Opened in September this year with six pupils, the Spring Valley Christian School is a small place with a big heart. The founders, Jeff and Naomi Cuozzo are church

planters, who also care for a growing congregation in Kendal. They are supported by a great team of helpers including a young couple who are former pupils of Bradford Christian School. Jeff and Naomi have carried the vision for a school since working together in Washington DC but never imagined that it would lead to God planting them in this area of the UK.

The school rents a small village hall on the side of a playing field with its own adventure playground, with easy access to beautiful countryside.

The six children, five boys and a girl, are taught in two groups with a strong emphasis on learning God's words and seeing how they relate to the world around them. Desks, books, room dividers, maps, games equipment and all of the necessary school paraphernalia are being provided as the school progresses. It's a place with a vibrant and exciting feel about it. As the children pray together there is a great sense of ownership of their school and who can doubt that their prayers for more pupils will be answered soon; especially for girls!

Vacancies.

Principal and Teachers needed in Bangladesh.

The Board of Grace International School, Dhaka, Bangladesh seek to appoint teachers and a Principal for this thriving Christian, international school teaching a British-based curriculum to expatriate children (3 to 16 years) from 25 countries. This year we are entering our first students for IGCSE exams. The school supplies an important service to Christians working in Dhaka and the wider expatriate community.

The school offers:

- Well-motivated children who enjoy coming to school.
- Dedicated, talented and enthusiastic staff.
- A committed and supportive governing body.
- Well-resourced classrooms and additional facilities.

Principal.

The successful candidate will have:

- An active Christian commitment and be eager to promote the Christian ethos of the school.
- Leadership and management experience.
- The vision to rise to the challenges and opportunities of meeting the needs of the international community in an overseas context.
- The interpersonal skills to support, inspire and motivate a committed staff.
- An understanding of English National Curriculum from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4.
- The ability to facilitate the cross-cultural nature of the school.
- A three-year commitment.

The package for the position of Principal includes:

- A living allowance.
- Free furnished accommodation.
- Free schooling for children.
- Annual return flight.

Teachers.

We invite applications from qualified and enthusiastic teachers looking for opportunities in Christian service. We need teachers across the age ranges in a variety of subject areas. The starting date could be either January or August 2008. Experience of the English National Curriculum is helpful but not essential.

For further details or an application form for either of the above positions please Email the Principal at:
principal@graceinternationalschool.org

Diary dates.

Heads' Days

Oakwood Court, Coventry
25th February 2008
13th October 2008

Appointed and Anointed

Regents Park, Nantwich
3rd-8th August 2008

CST Conference

19th-22nd February 2009

Christian Schools' Trust, Oakfield House, Droitwich Road, Worcester WR3 7ST
Telephone: +44 (0)1905 759740 Fax: +44 (0)1905 754492
Email: office@christianschoolstrust.co.uk Registered charity no. 293315

WingSpan is published by the Christian Schools' Trust and produced by Angelplay Creative Communications (www.angelplaycreative.co.uk). All reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure that the information contained in this issue is correct at time of going to print. The publishers and producers cannot be held responsible for any and all direct or indirect consequences resulting from possible errors in this magazine and effects arising therefrom.

www.christianschoolstrust.co.uk

WingSpan

Christian Schools' Trust

The magazine of the Christian Schools' Trust

Issue Number 17. New Year 2008

Growing our schools.

In this first issue of our re-launched magazine we explore the topic of 'Growing our schools'.

If we were not already concerned for the growing generation in our country then a headline from the early part of this term ought to have sent our alarm bells clanging:

'Schools to give lessons in happiness.'

Apparently the government, in their best efforts to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, have discovered that happy and peaceful children learn more effectively. They have also discovered that, sadly, many children are not happy and peaceful.

When this news is added to that of another young boy committing suicide because of bullying at school; or of a young girl attacked and beaten almost senseless by two girls from her school; or of another community in fear of gangs of violent youths; when these are added together then the blatantly obvious shouts even louder.

'What this world needs is
a Saviour who will rescue
A Spirit who will lead
A Father who will love them
in their time of need
A Saviour who will rescue
A Spirit who will lead
A Father who will love
That's what this world needs.'
(Casting Crowns 2007)

Poised against all of that, however, is the burgeoning strength of debate concerning the success of faith schools. Ed Balls, the minister for The Department of Schools, Children and Families made this remarkable statement quite recently.

"One thing we've learnt as a government is that having a distinct ethos, strong leadership, a commitment to promoting opportunity for all, those are the kind of schools where parents want to send their children. And there are many faith schools which pass that test with flying colours."
(BBC News 24, Monday 10 September 2007)

Could we possibly be at a point in our nation's destiny when Christ-centred education is beginning to be recognised as a significant part of the answer to our society's desperate cry?

If we are, how do we respond? The parable of the sower is familiar enough to us. Eugene Peterson's Message paraphrases Mark 4:20 as follows:

'But the seed planted in the good earth represents those who hear the Word, embrace it and produce a crop *beyond their wildest dreams!* (Italics mine)

That last phrase caught my attention. If the crop from God's word is to exceed my wildest dreams then I need some *wild* dreams. Dreams are not what we have already seen but what we barely hope for, what we can hardly imagine happening.

What is God's word to you? What dreams do you have? How wild are they? Are they so far beyond your own capabilities that only the Lord could achieve them and so all of the praise and glory would go to Him? These are the kind of dreams that we need if we are to see our nation turned towards Jesus.

Can you dream of the numbers of pupils in our schools (currently about 3,500) doubling over the next 5 years? Can you dream of the number of schools in CST doubling over the next 10 years? Can you dream of 100,000 Christian families across the UK hearing about what God is doing in our schools? Can you dream of a greater flow of God's life through our schools, more salvation, more healing of body, soul and spirit, more young people being sent out to take His love to the nations? If you can dream that then the Lord can go further.

Graham Coyle, National Team Leader



Promoting your school.

This article is a summary of discussions at the CST Heads' Day on 21st May at Oakwood Court.

Most Headteachers agree that there is a definite need to take seriously the promotion of our schools. Each school needs to look carefully at identifying key personnel to mount a promotional campaign. Some Headteachers may not have the ability or the time to organise a regular and ongoing programme in addition to the other roles they fulfil. Each school therefore needs to identify who could undertake such a task, perhaps someone outside of the school. However, the Headteacher, as the key vision holder, needs to be involved in the process to a significant extent. As well as the administration and logistics which need to be deployed in promotions, it is important that sharing the vision of the school is central to the promotional message.

Some of our schools have been in existence for many years, however, they are not necessarily well known in the local Christian community. How can you put your school on the Christian map in your area? The most positive points are presented as bullet points and provocative questions for you to consider.

What can you do to promote your school?

- Open days and open evenings; make these pleasant, emphasising welcoming hospitality. Put on refreshments and make sure the school looks its best, include student and parent testimonies and a formal presentation using PowerPoint or something similar.
- Ask pastors to speak at your assemblies and ask them to talk about their vision for their congregation. Can you pray for them when they visit and make them part of the prayer life of the school? Can you return to their churches and serve them in any way, not necessarily asking for anything in return?
- Have school representatives in each congregation found in the school. Have them promote the school within the church.
- Visit reluctant and sceptical pastors in person. Invite them to the school, or have a member of your staff in their congregation invite them, as a member of their flock, to see where they work.

How is your ministry received in your town or city? How can you change this for the better?

The general trend is for evangelistic church leaders to see the school as a drain on church resources in terms of key people and finances.

The argument goes that the church, as salt and light, should be at the heart of the community as a witness, as such local schools are great places for Christians to be. Christian families and teachers 'locked away in holy huddles' are counter-productive to the church being involved in the community.

How would you counter this?

- Of course Christian involvement in local schools is a relevant and beneficial thing. Encourage people to see that Christian schools and Christians involved in local state schools are both key strategies for the sake of the Kingdom. They do not have to be mutually exclusive. God raises up people to be involved in local schools, so how can you as a Christian school encourage them? Gather all you know to be the criticisms of Christian schools from leaders in your city and answer those criticisms as an active part of your promotion. For example, signing-up to your fee-paying school in a spiralling house market will challenge parents' lifestyles. How will you tackle this positively with such parents?
- Be careful not to be overly critical of people who do not share your vision for Christian education. How can you help people to come to a point where God can give them a revelation of the significance of your cause?

- Is your school only open to members of one church or a group of churches? Do you need to reconsider this?
- Do you discriminate against Christians from other churches in terms of different fees? Is this good for your relationship with others?
- Are you nurturing relationships with Christian mums, toddlers and pre-schools?
- Be aware that disaffected Christian families who leave your school can cause damage to your local reputation.

What practical steps must you take to free up time within your organisation to take promotion more seriously?

- Time, money and the right personnel need to be deployed to this task.
- Marketing is a specialised skill. Headteachers may not have those skills as they don't traditionally fit with their role.
- Make sure you have good quality literature, updated and regularly dispersed from your school.
- Make sure you have a good quality website, maintained regularly.
- Can you employ administrative help to free up the Head to be part of a promotional package, or just to have time to carry out his or her job with enthusiasm and energy.
- Court a good working relationship with the local press, pass them regular press releases of newsworthy items telling them about the life of your school.

Ten top tips to promoting your school.

1. Realise that this is a good and positive thing for you to do. Done carefully this is another form of giving a strong testimony of what God is doing with you. The rest of the church, and indeed the nation at large, need to know!
2. Constantly allowing yourself to be viewed as part of a promotional programme can sharpen your own practices and help your whole staff clarify their commitment to your vision.

3. Serve the local church. You should not automatically expect Church leaders to come and endorse you. What are their needs that you can meet?
4. Your parents are your school's best ambassadors. How can you mobilise them to tell their contacts about the school?
5. Your students are the current products of your mission. Get them to serve other churches and the local community. Your students are powerful adverts for your school.
6. Write up the stories of your ex-students. They will probably value the school even more now that they have left. The difference your school made to their lives will be a powerful advert for the school.
7. Make criticisms work for you. If what you are criticised for is true, make changes. If criticisms are untrue and unfair, find ways to positively challenge these.
8. Create a team to promote your school. The Headteacher may not be the best person to lead the team but he or she should be a key member of it, as the one most able to share the vision.
9. Free up your Headteacher to have the time, energy and encouragement to lead the school forward. Innovate to be relevant for today's students and challenges.
10. Remember that God responds to the faith and obedience of his people. Once you have determined what God requires of you in this season and you begin to respond to Him in faith, the changes He calls forth in your school become the basis for how you are to promote yourselves.

Suggestions.

There are a number of ministries and schools who have already developed a flair for promotion and publicity. One such organisation is Christians Against Poverty (CAP), who are an international debt-relief ministry. Due to the nature of their clients they have had to become very good at promotion and fundraising. They are based in Bradford and we have close links with them as a school. It's always valuable seeing what other Christian organisations are doing in terms of their marketing and promotional activities and trying to learn from their experience.

Alternatively, there are a growing number of Christian advertising and marketing agencies who have a heart to see God's kingdom grow through the medium of high-quality and effective marketing materials. It would be well worth you seeking out a Christ-centred creative communications agency who is able to work closely with you.

How can the CST Core Team help promote your school in its local setting?

- Firstly, there are advantages and disadvantages to the CST coming in as 'outsiders'.
- Could the Core Team organise a day for Governors and Heads on marketing?
- Could Core Team members meet parents at key events in the life of a school; for example, annual parents' evenings?
- Is it time for another round of CST Roadshows?
- Could space be made available in your prospectus to inform readers about the CST and your school's involvement in the bigger picture?

Coming soon.

Dow Robinson and 'Intuitional Knowledge'.



Many of you will remember Dow from his previous visits to the UK. His teaching and prophetic input have been of immense value and encouragement to us over the years. Recently he and David Freeman have been working on a paper examining 'intuitional knowledge' and its importance to us in Christian education. In particular they have sought to define it within a Biblical worldview and examine its relationship with other types of knowledge, especially that gained through scientific investigation. We are hoping that Dow will be able to join us in the early summer next year for a short series of meetings where we can examine this topic in more depth. Dates are not confirmed yet but we will contact schools as soon as they are available.