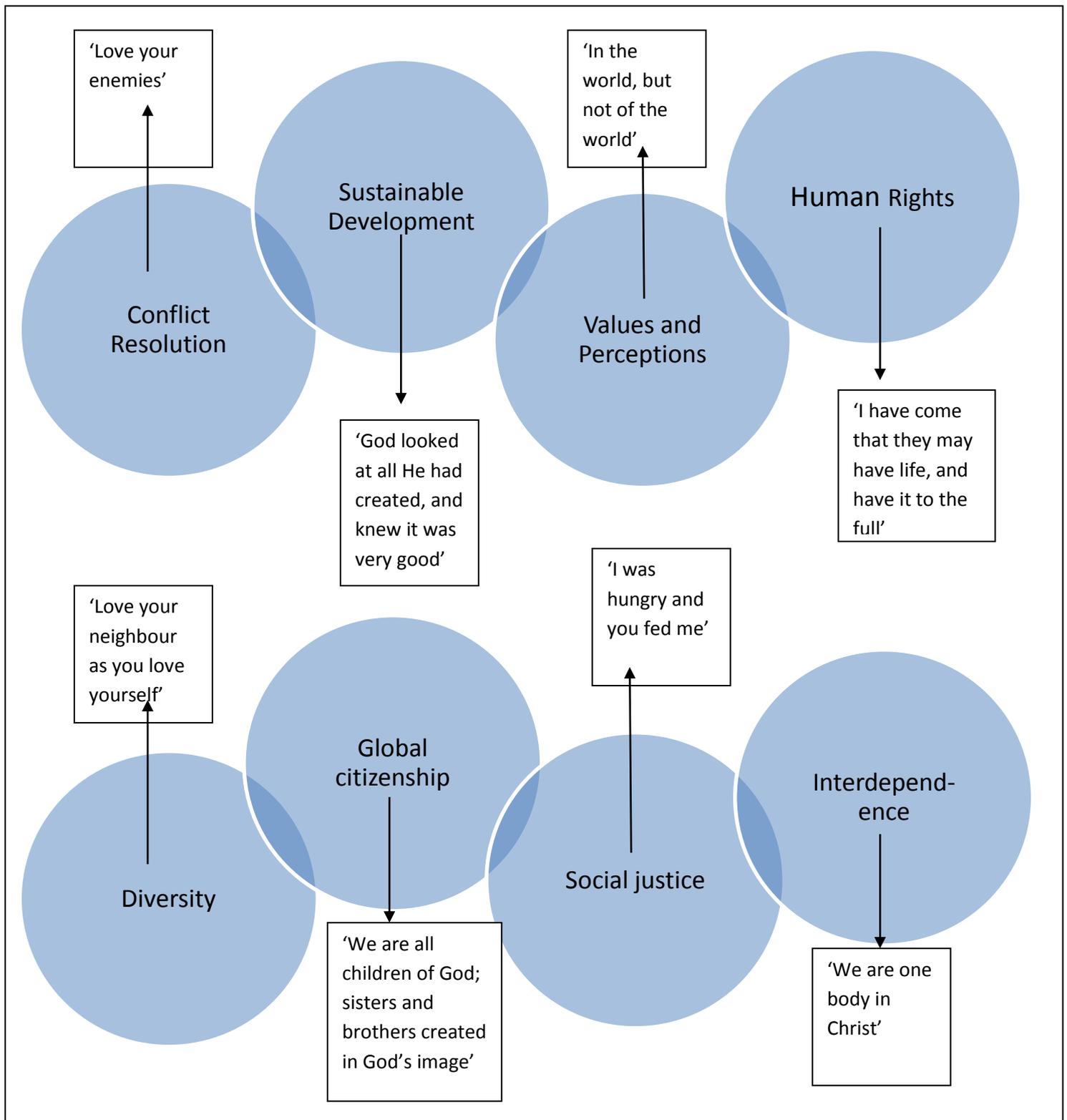


International partnerships contributing to church school ethos

Some of the points here may be helpful to schools in thinking about how an international partnership might contribute to the church school ethos. (adapted from 'Every Child of God Matters Everywhere' – Bradford, Ripon and Leeds Diocesan Education team)



Global Citizenship

Ephesians 2 v19. You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household.

Christianity is a world church beyond nationhood.

Christianity recognises all people as being created in God's image, fellow children of God, brothers and sisters.

Christians have a responsibility to each other – brothers and sisters around the world.

Membership of the world church gives Christians in the UK the opportunity to gain perspectives from Christians around the world.

Social justice

Matthew 5 v 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat

Jesus came to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. (Donal Dorr)

Christians are called to follow the example of Jesus, who cared passionately for those who were poor or oppressed.

Christian teaching shows that when Christians show compassion by feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty etc they show compassion to Christ himself.

In repeating the Lord's Prayer in school children pray 'Thy Kingdom Come'. This means caring for the poor and oppressed, learning from their lives and being committed to bringing about a fairer and more just world.

The gospel message shouts loud and clear that Jesus challenge is to see with the perspective of those who are oppressed and join with them in their struggle for social justice.

Diversity

Matthew 6 v 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven

Jesus engaged with people who others thought of as 'outsiders'.

Jesus message is not just about celebrating differences, but about engaging with diversity that may be uncomfortable.

Christians recognise the diversity and uniqueness of every human being.

Christians are called to protect the diverse eco-systems, not only for their beauty and for the fact that humanity depends on them, but also because God created them, saw that they were good, and blessed them, entrusting them to humanity.

Interdependence

Romans 12 v 4-5 in the same way, all of us, though there are so many of us, make up one body in Christ, and as different parts we are all joined to one another

'Before you have finished breakfast this morning, you'll have relied on half the world' (Martin Luther King).

Globalisation means that the world is a very small place and people are linked ever more closely.

Societies are interdependent but not equal.

Christians are called to live in a way that recognises our connectedness as 'one body in Christ'.

Christians are called to reject the systems that exploit the poorest in the world.

Christians are called to take responsibility for the environment.

Sustainable development

Luke 12 v 15 Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in how many possessions he has

Aspire not to have more, but to be more (Archbishop Oscar Romero).

Christians are called by Jesus to be more concerned about quality of life than standard of living.

Christians believe that more luxuries could be a block to responding to God's call so a simpler lifestyle enables people to be more open to God.

Church schools should be educating children for 'abundant life'.

Church schools should be helping pupils to question and develop values that underpin their aspirations.

Christians believe that all life and life systems are God's creations.

The world is not just our home, but home to all people on earth and so all have responsibility to care for it.

Human rights

Proverbs 22 v 2 Rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all

Christians believe that human dignity comes from the fact humans are created in the image and likeness of God.

All human beings have basic needs and all needs, including spiritual, must be met if they are to live a dignified and abundant life.

The second commandment, according to Jesus is to 'love your neighbour as you love yourself'.

Christians have responsibility for respecting and fulfilling their own and others rights and needs.

Christians must do all they can to support others in their fight for rights which others may take for granted.

Conflict resolution

Matthew 5 v 43-45 I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly father

Christians believe that no relationship should be closed off to the possibility of God's transforming love.

Christians believe that loving enemies is an absolute refusal to see your enemy as outside God's love.

Jesus did not respond to violence with violence – he suffered much, but did not retaliate in a way that would hurt his opponents/enemies.

Lots of Christians have set an example of peaceful conflict resolution – Martin Luther King.

Christians need to rehearse the practice of non-violence in daily life so they can resort to it in a crisis.

Values and perceptions

Romans 12 v 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind

The Christian values the school promotes should encourage the members of the school community to consider an alternative life style to how many in society choose to live.

Christians should aim to 'swim against the flow' and maintain an alternative perspective against a pervasive material culture so fundamental to 21st century society.

Children need to have the opportunity to listen to the voices of those who are marginalised in our world.

Christians should encourage children to understand what it means to repent of the situation the world is in and to seek to bring about a fairer and more just world.

Christians are called not to live any longer by the pattern of the world but to look for alternative patterns to live by.

Church schools should encourage active, participatory prayers for those in the majority world.

Church schools should encourage action from the school community to challenge those with power to change things.

Children should be encouraged to live in the world, but not to be 'of the world' - this can be done through engagement with all the issues raised in the key concepts of global education.

Children can be encouraged to believe that they can make a difference by choices they make.