

CHANGING GEAR

Preparing ourselves for the next five
years



How the morning will unfold....

- Revisiting – then celebrating – our agreed vision: what has happened this year as we have pursued it – and our personal roles in doing that...
- Telling each other where we see they have impacted our vision.
- Changing Gear – what this could mean for us...
- Commitments we will make to achieve this...
- A final “view of learning” from Ken Robinson



Ground rules...

- Speak peaceably and kindly to each other
- Take **personal responsibility** for as much as we can – be proud of what each of us has done & achieved!
- Look for the opportunity *all the time* to praise and bless other people for what *they* have done.
- When thinking about the future, regard change, challenge and even disappointment as **opportunity!**



On your tables...

- **Red cards:** you will need these later...
- **Cards of another colour...** you will use these for recording
- **Sweets of various sorts:** for eating
- **Vision sheets:** reminders for when we get talking...



How our vision became clear...

- Written in 2012 and adopted the same year...
- Relates our founding story – *The Parable of the Sower* – to the **fruitfulness in living**, **excellence in learning** and a **diverse community celebrating love**, that we think adults and children need here.
- Has both the **power** (in its words and what it describes) and **authority** (from the position we have given it) to last for at least another 5 years



The Good Earth...

At Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School, we provide the GOOD EARTH for all in our community to flourish: where every member can be who they were created to be, with the high expectation that we, individually and collectively, will bear fruit beyond our wildest dreams – a place where we are **LOVING, LEARNING, GROWING** together.



We have begun to provide Good Earth, when, for example...

...we treat individuals with the care that God intends for them

...we refuse to let anyone think less of themselves than they ought

...we plan great lessons that meet the needs of all of our children

...we adapt our work and our planning to meet the needs of those we work with

...we write and implement policies that protect the vulnerable



We have begun to provide Good Earth, when, for example...

...we insist that learning together is as important as learning individually

...we model respectful and kind relationships for the children and for parents and for each other

...we show by “going the extra mile” that what we do is more than just a job

...we make space for each other and for children to dream and imagine a wonderful future



A loving community...

At our heart is an ever-increasing understanding of God as a source of love. Because we know each child as a **UNIQUE TREASURE**, we value each other, treating each other as we would expect to be treated ourselves. Being motivated by love, we strive to be a community where everyone works for the good of everyone else.



We have begun to create a loving community, when for example...

...we have a conversation with a child that is not just about their learning

...we notice, and do something about it, when a colleague is looking poorly

...we use restorative practice to sort out a broken relationship

...we plan for each child to learn what *they* need

...we teach children to respect and love their friends family



We have begun to create a loving community, when for example...

...we use What-If learning to enable children to see life from others' point of view

...we teach children to think about how they would want to be treated in any situation they face

...we submit to one another's wishes for the good of the friendship, and teach children to do the same

...we speak politely to those who disagree with us or who choose to be rude to us



A learning community...

Believing that we can all excel, we are a community that deeply desires to learn. We nurture children and adults so that we are all empowered to be fearless, lifelong learners: embracing challenge, releasing creativity, persisting through difficulty, seeing mistakes as opportunity, discovering for ourselves and responding in wonder to what we find.



We have begun to create a learning community, when for example...

...we judge the quality of our teaching by what our children have learnt

...we notice children's good learning and build on that for them

...we help children over obstacles to their own learning

...we help children find creative ways of expressing their learning

...we identify ourselves as *learners* and pay attention to our own learning and qualification



We have begun to create a learning community, when for example...

...we choose to learn from our own mistakes and help children (and other adults) learn from theirs

...we pay attention to our agreed theory of learning to help children's learning go deeper

...we allow children space to wonder and be amazed at the world, and treasure that wondering

...we refrain from giving the answers too early and allow children to discover answers for themselves

...we plan lessons which are open-ended; or plan child-owned units of work



A growing community...

We diligently strive for excellence in all we do by working our hardest and seeking to improve.

At Christ the Sower we “grow” people who are able to embrace the fullness of life and nourish a growing community where that life can be expressed.



We have begun to create a growing community, when for example...

...we create opportunities in our classroom for children to serve each other

...we give children “work-roles” in our school

...we, at any time, value children as members of their families

...we celebrate what is special to children

...we do not accept second-best, either for ourselves or for our children

...we speak of good work as valuable and worthy of our best efforts



We have begun to create a growing community, when for example...

...we take time to listen to children's concerns, wherever we are in school

...we take care with the school's resources and use them well and with respect

...we plan as leaders for the best use and deployment of staff

...we choose to pay the Living Wage, not the minimum wage

...we seek opportunities to be involved in school life even beyond our "remit"



A community together...

We rejoice in our diversity and recognise that we are parts of the same body journeying together, walking hand-in-hand with God. We aim to provide a rich and true experience of Christian community, being a beacon of love, light and hope here on the west flank of MK.



We have begun to be a community together, when for example...

...we welcome parents into classrooms as partners in learning

...we offer hospitality to visitors, to governors, to new children and their families

...we alter our perspective to allow others' points of view to influence us, and accept and celebrate those

...when we act deliberately out of God's love for us and consciously act as disciples

...we speak well of each other, and allow hope for the future to determine our actions

...we combine realism with compassion in how we treat other.



And now....?

- All of these examples are listed on the reminder sheets on your tables.
- In your existing groups, identify 3 or 4 things that YOU have done this year, personally, to contribute to the vision of the school. Write them on the pieces of coloured card.
- For each statement, be **SPECIFIC, FOCUSED** (on the vision)
- If you are struggling to define your impact, ask those who work with you. They will have seen your impact, so include their perspective as well
- **NB. PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY. PLEASE.**



And next . . . ?

Take the cards you have just completed, along with a **RED CARD**, and go to the table indicated on the **red card**.

Talk to the people on your new table about what you have done this year to help further fulfil our school vision. The purpose is to **ARTICULATE THE IMPACT WE HAVE MADE** to one another. We are compiling an **EVIDENCE BASE**.

Listen carefully to each other – you may learn more about the impact you have made. Add to your cards if anyone adds to your “evidence base”



When we talk about

CHANGING GEAR

...what exactly are we talking about?



The Key Question

How do we **stay true to our vision**, and maintain the impact we are having, in the midst of imposed, external changes?

- ❖ Has been an important question before...
- ❖ But in the light of academisation and new partnerships....?
- ❖ How do we position ourselves? What needs to change?



The Key Question: possible answers

Change? Probably not very much, actually.

- ❖ The vision is sound
- ❖ The direction is clear
- ❖ We are convinced that the SDP addresses the right areas.

Changes will be needed in areas such as depth, diversity, autonomy, richness of children's experience.



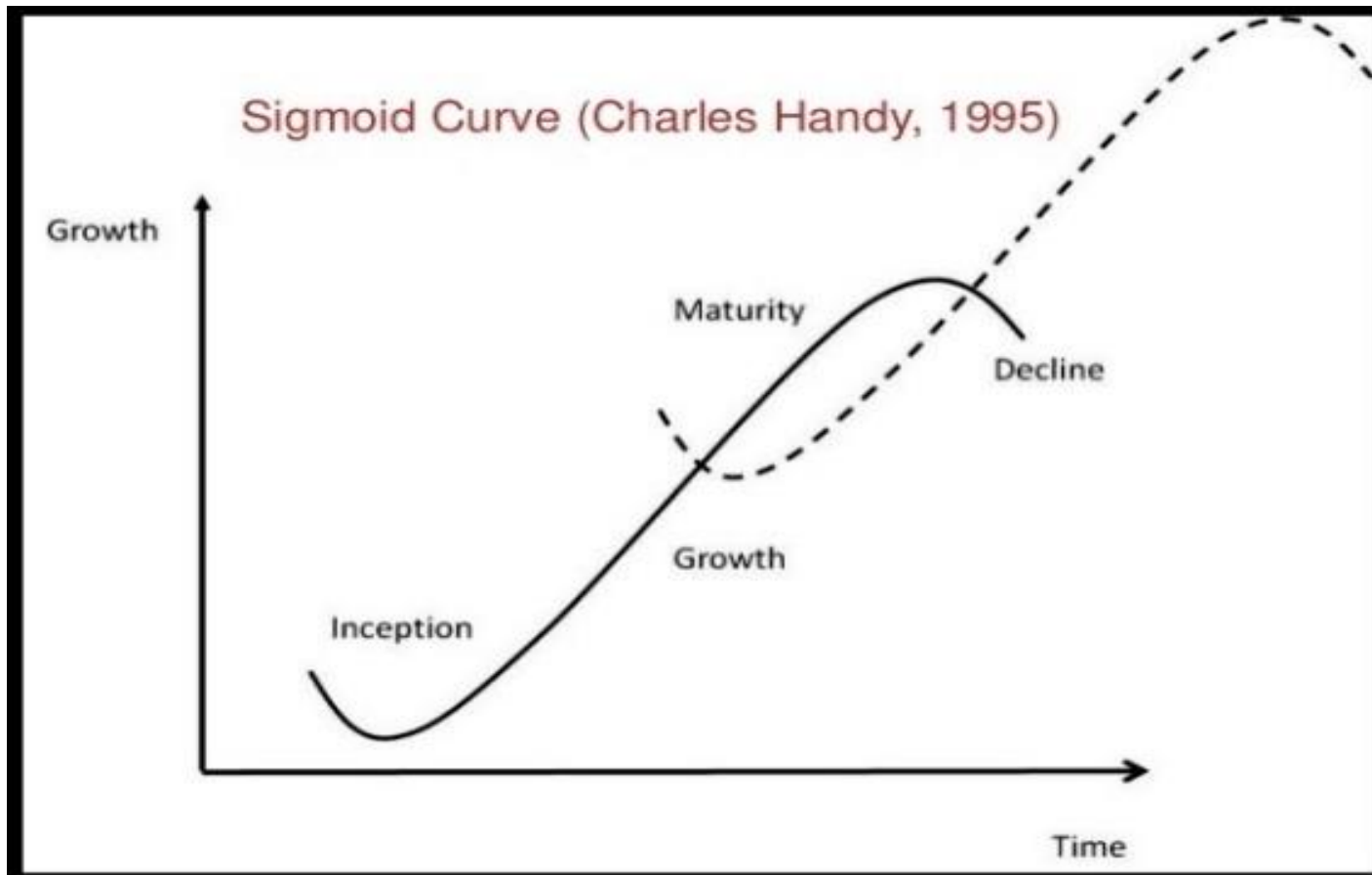
The Key Question: possible answers

So in changing gear, we are contemplating

- **a richer understanding of our work and impact**
- **a determination NOT to spend time on those things that do not impact on fulfilment of our vision**
- **redirecting energies to the heart of our calling as educators and pastors of our children and parents**



The Key Question: a model to consider



Where are we
now as a school?
Discuss...



The Key Question: possible responses

So in changing gear, each of us, in every role that we are called to, will need to make a specific and personal commitment to actions that will enrich our school and contribute directly to the fulfilment of the vision.

- **For staff, that time is September.**
- **For governors, that time is NOW.**



And to finish with...

https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_how_to_escape_education_s_death_valley?language=en

