



# Values Guide for Schools

**What's important to you as a school?**

**Values are the things that are important to us both as individuals and as members of the school community.**

World Values Day challenges us to think about our own values and the values held by the school community we belong to, and encourages us to act on those values. By putting those values into action each and every day, we can change ourselves, strengthen the identity and cohesiveness of our schools and their wider communities, and ultimately change the world we live in for the better.

This is the World Values Day call to action!

**World Values Day – 19th October 2017**

**[www.worldvaluesday.com](http://www.worldvaluesday.com)**

**#WorldValuesDay**

## 1. What are Values?

Values are what make us who we are. They are the compass guiding everything we do - our choices and our actions. When we lose touch with that compass, we can take the wrong turn. It's the same for our families, for our school communities, and for society as a whole. Our values show us the way.

Values are the things that are important to us, the foundation of our lives. They guide our choices and behaviours and influence our emotions.

Values are at the heart of all schools and communities of every kind. They are the glue that binds them together. Values define their culture, the way they operate and the impact they have on their communities and the world. They are our motivators, our guides, and they keep us all focused and on track.



## 2. Why are Values so important for schools?

Every school community will inevitably be based on certain values. But often those values are not held completely consciously, or are taken for granted and forgotten about.

If any community is not clear about what values are holds them together and motivates them to do what they do together, they will fall prey to lack of cohesion, lack of direction, and lack of motivation. They will struggle to attract and retain members (staff and students), make good decisions, and agree effective priorities and goals.

Communities who don't consistently practice their values will be less able to stand the stresses and strains that affect any group of individuals who spend time with each other. Whether it's tackling external problems or internal disputes, or planning ahead, or getting things done - everything is more difficult without shared values to rely upon.

Communities that are clear about their values, where those values are aligned with their members' values, and where people makes a consistent effort to practice those values, will tend to produce a culture which is collaborative and resilient and where members are well motivated, happy and productive.

### 3. Can Values really change the world?

We can all sometimes forget our values or just ignore them – often when we need them most. Then we find ourselves somewhere we really don't want to be. This is just as true for communities as it is for individuals.

But there is a wider impact when individuals and communities forget their values. If those values are not lived to the full in our lives, at home, at school and in the community, then our society won't live those values either. If our own society doesn't reflect our values, then the wider world will certainly not reflect them either. It won't be a world we want to live in, where we can be fulfilled and happy.

So if we want to change the world for the better, then we have to change the behaviours that currently make our world go round. And the only way to do that is for all of us to live our values to the full every day in everything we do.



#### 4. Our school doesn't have official Values. How do we go about identifying them?

Here is one way to find your values and decide which are the most important ones ***that you would like to see*** in your school (these will not necessarily be the same ones that you see there now). Try to get as many of the school's staff as possible take part in this exercise. You could also consider involving at least some of the students in this exercise too – this is a judgement for each school to make depending on factors such as the age of the students, the extent to which they have already done some thinking on values etc.

Each person taking part in the exercise should have a copy of the list on the next page and follow these simple instructions.

Reflect first about the activities you all normally take part in, and what it looks like when it goes well and what it looks like when it sometimes doesn't go so well.

Then look down the list and tick the box opposite the 10 words in the following table that best describe the values that you consider need to be reflected in your school to support its success.

Once you have selected 10, then you should next reduce these to your top 5. This two-step process will help you to appreciate how some values may be more essential to you than others. Then put the 5 values in order of importance from 1 to 5, with 1 being the value which is most important to you.

Collect the lists from everyone and by adding up the number of times a value is included in participants' "Top 5", you will discover the overall top 5 values that have been voted as being the most important values for the school. This way of identifying the school's core values should ensure that the school's values are aligned with those of its members, and that the members "buy into" the values of the school and really take them to heart.

## Group Values

acceptance		creativity		initiative		respect	
accessibility		dependability		innovation		responsibility	
accountability		democracy		integrity		reward	
achievement		development				safety	
adaptability		diversity		justice		security	
appreciation		efficiency		kindness		sense of purpose	
authenticity		empowerment		leadership		service	
awareness		enthusiasm		learning		simplicity	
beauty		environmental awareness		listening		social responsibility	
calmness		equality		loyalty		success	
caution		ethics		making a difference		support	
caring		excellence		openness		teamwork	
celebration		fairness		order		trust	
challenge		financial stability		partnership		truth	
cleanliness		forgiveness		patience		variety	
coaching/mentoring		freedom		perseverance		wellbeing	
collaboration		fun		positivity		willingness	
commitment		growth		pride		wisdom	
community involvement		harmony		productivity		willingness	
competence		helpfulness		professionalism		add here*	
continuous improvement		inclusivity		quality		add here*	
contribution to society		independence		recognition		add here*	
cooperation		sharing		reliability		add here*	

\* If a value is important to you and it is not on the list, add it here.

- The most important values: 1.....  
 2.....  
 3.....  
 4.....  
 5.....



## 5. Now put those values into action – take the Values Challenge!

You are now ready to take the Values Challenge. The best way to do this is to involve both staff and students (and parents and governors if possible), so that the whole school community is involved.

The process involves two steps:

**Staff session.** Try to get as many of the staff as possible take part in a one-hour session in which everyone focuses on one of the school's core values and through discussion and collaboration work out a single action to put that value into practice across the school. Register here to:

[Take the Challenge](#)

to receive the free resource pack with simple instructions and suggestions which will enable you to run that session yourselves, in the way best suited to your school.

Through their involvement in the one-hour session the staff will then be well-prepared to help and encourage the students to participate later.

If your school does not yet have an official set core values, please use section 4 of this guide to help you identify the values that are most important to your school.

**Involve the students.** The next step will be to involve all the students in putting the same value into action. If appropriate they can practice the same action as the staff so that everyone in the school gets involved in the same activity. Or they can be asked to come up with their own ideas for putting that value into practice – something challenging, creative, fun, something that can make a difference. There could be some sort of recognition for the best/most effective actions. Perhaps the students themselves can be asked to think about which actions worked the best, and why, and that action can then be put into practice across the whole school.

Here are some ideas that could be used to prompt the students:



You could hold a **Values Day/ Values Week** where students discuss values (this can be incorporated with planned autumn term topics) including how they can put them into action in school, at home and in the community.

**Starting the discussion** – you could kick-start discussion among the students by delivering an assembly around a particular value (the one chosen by the staff maybe). You could give examples about how they could put the value into action – for instance if the value is **Environmental Awareness, Teamwork, or Responsibility** the suggestion could involve picking up rubbish in and around the school, and/or tidying common areas, class rooms and equipment, the school garden, and playing areas. If the value was Community Involvement you could suggest they tidy and clean up a local play area or park or other local site, or visit a retirement home and talk to residents or do a short performance such as a song or skit, or read poems and short stories. Get them to come up with their own ideas.

## **6. Please share what you have done**

Please then **share** what you have done with us and with the world on social media, telling us about the value you chose, what action you decided to take, and how the action went by posting on our Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube or Instagram using #WorldValuesDay and @ValuesDay or by emailing us at [info@worldvaluesday.com](mailto:info@worldvaluesday.com)

**Remember not to publish any photographs or personal information about children without receiving the appropriate parental permissions.**

Use words, photos, video clips.

Whatever works best for your organisation.

Find us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/ValuesDay](http://www.facebook.com/ValuesDay)

Find us on Twitter [www.twitter.com/ValuesDay](http://www.twitter.com/ValuesDay)

Find us on Instagram [www.instagram.com/valuesday/](http://www.instagram.com/valuesday/)

Find us on YouTube <http://bit.ly/2uANxYp>

To help you do this you can download the [‘We Value’ template](#) from the website and fill in your chosen value and the action taken, and then use it in a group selfie. Share what you’ve done with the world!



## 7. Pass on the Challenge

Want to make an even bigger difference in the world? Pass on the news about the Challenge to other groups. Become values activists! Join our mailing list and start tagging your colleagues, friends and family with #WorldValuesDay - or yes, talk to them in real life. You'll probably be amazed by the conversations and connections this starts.

Let's do this together!



World Values Day is a chance to think about our most deeply held values and to act on them. If we are aware of our values and put them into action each and every day, we can change our lives and change the world we live in for the better. This is the World Values Day call to action!



Please join us and register your interest in one of the many values-related activities that will be taking place - from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 right up to World Values Day on 19th October 2017.

Let's show the world just how valuable living our values can be.

**Get involved!**

**#WorldValuesDay**

**[www.worldvaluesday.com](http://www.worldvaluesday.com)**

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