



SACRED HEART EDUCATION

HERI
TAGE
& HOR
IZON

SACRED HEART GOALS

FAITH
CHARACTER
INTELLECT
COMMUNITY
SOCIAL
AWARENESS

Introduction to the Goals

THE ORIGINS

The first school of the Society of the Sacred Heart was founded in Amiens in France in 1801. Since then Sacred Heart Schools have spread to the five continents and to more than forty countries. The Society is divided worldwide into 'provinces', one of which is Ireland-Scotland. The strong link between Sacred Heart Schools finds its primary expression in the bonding between schools of the one province, but also extends to Sacred Heart Schools all over the world. The links between our schools come not only from history and our common origins but from the shared experience of a living tradition. This tradition originates in the first Plan of Studies written in 1805.

With the changes in society and in the Church that occurred at the time of Vatican 2, it was recognised that the common vision shared by all Sacred Heart Schools needed to be reformulated for a new era. In the early 1970s a Network of Sacred Heart Schools was set up in the United States of America. This Network articulated St. Madeleine Sophie's aims by identifying five key characteristics in the development of our students, namely, faith, character, intellect, community and social concern.

ENDURING VALUES

We see these characteristics as representing and giving life to a set of enduring values which link us back to Sophie's time and bring us forward confidently into the future. The Irish-Scottish Province actively promotes the transmission of shared values through workshops for staff and senior management teams, regular meetings of heads of schools and through the publication of its policy document, Heritage and Horizon. As stated by Sr. Cavanagh in the Second Edition, 'The combined faith interaction and reflection shared among managements and staffs, and especially the relationship between staff and pupils/students in our school communities, give shape to the mission of these schools as we move into the new millennium.'

OUR GOALS

This third edition of Heritage and Horizon expresses our basic values in terms of five Goals,

- A Living Faith
- Personal Growth
- Intellectual Values
- Building Community
- Active Social Awareness

These Goals represent values which Sacred Heart Schools wish to promote and live by. They guide our behaviour and identify us as belonging to a common family. They are the public expression of what we are and what we stand for. In effect, they express our corporate identity. The active pursuit of these Goals will bring us safely into the future because the values they represent transcend time.

However values alone mean little. Actions speak louder than words and it is through the daily articulation of our values that we demonstrate and energise our educational mission. We must continually monitor, measure and evaluate our performance in this regard and you will find some suggestions on how to do this in the following pages.

The concept of the whole person is central to Sacred Heart Education philosophy. We have succeeded when our pupils become responsible members of society, confident of their own worth, and are capable of pursuing their personal missions with energy, purpose and conviction.

Our pupils may experience times of economic and social turmoil. It is our hope that Sacred Heart Education will equip them with the faith and the fortitude to cope with the challenges they will face.

The Goals material in this Third Edition will assist us in this endeavour.

USING THE GOALS MATERIAL EFFECTIVELY

The following content is intended to act as a guide to teachers, Goals Coordinators and staff members on the use of the Goals in the day to day operations of the school.

Although our Goals are articulated and described as separate entities, they combine to provide a unified structure of meaning to our educational philosophy. When we consider the meaning inherent in each individual Goal, we can see that the values the Goals represent overlap and are interlinked. The following pages offer some assistance in putting these values into action in our daily mission as educators. The suggested exercises are designed to inform, encourage and stimulate creative action. Our Goals only become effective through appropriate and persistent action.

The Goal pages are designed with similar sections as outlined in the model below:

The Goal

This section provides a short outline of the purpose of the Goal.

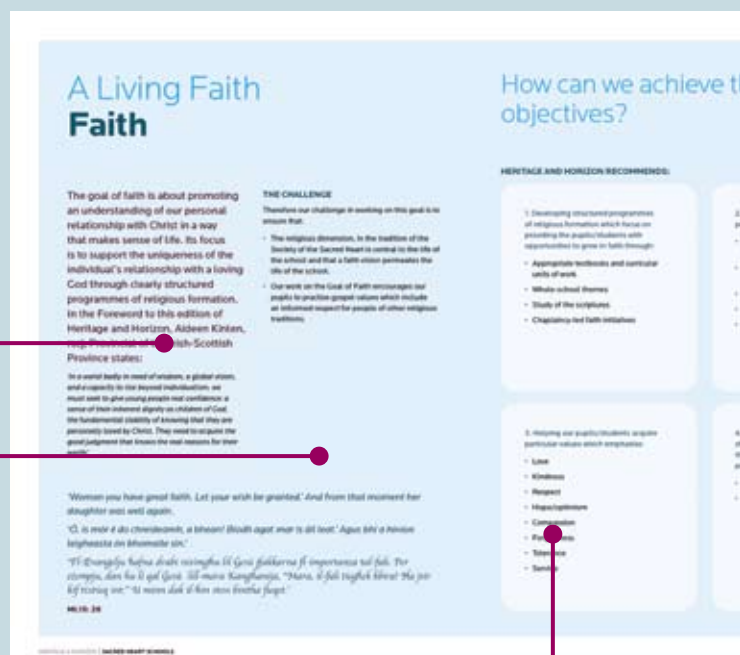
Some reflection on this statement will stimulate your own insights on the essence of the Goal and its meaning as a critical element of our ethos.

The Challenge

This section describes the broad outcomes that we expect to achieve through pursuit of the Goal in question.

How Can We Achieve This?

These statements offer suggestions on ways to put the Goal into action. Reflection on these statements will generate many ideas on possible interventions you can take in the school.



'In our world of inequality, our spirit of Solidarity and Sharing should be promoted as a Responsibility for us all to work towards eradicating poverty.'

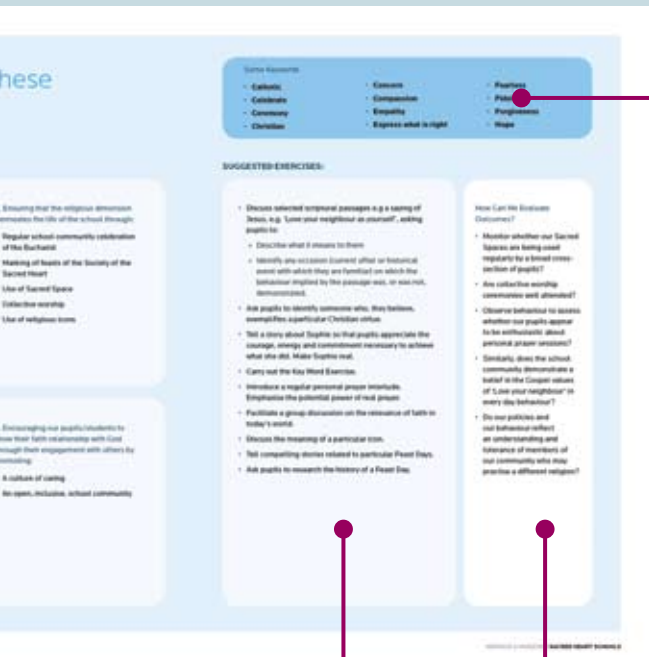
Claudia Taylor-East

Director, SOS Malta (Voluntary Organisation), former pupil Malta

SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

With respect to all the Goals we can ask ourselves a number of questions about our schools. The questions can challenge and motivate us. As we work into the future it is essential that the answer to each of these is in the affirmative.

- Does our school culture, as expressed through policies, procedures, rules, processes and behaviour, positively reflect and support the Goals?
- Do we take corrective action when we observe behaviour that is contrary to the spirit of the Goals?
- Wherever possible, do we attempt to infuse the formal curriculum with the spirit of the Goal?
- Do our visible icons, posters and other display material reflect the Goals?
- Do we, as individual educators, serve as role models for our students?
- Do we consult with our peers in our own school and in other schools often enough about best practice?



Key Words

This is a list of key words or terms associated with the Goal. The Key Word Exercise is carried out as follows.

- Nominate a Key Word or ask pupils to nominate one.
- Ask pupils to discuss the word in small groups for 5 minutes, discussing questions such as 'What does it mean to them?' 'How could it effect their lives?'.
- Nominate a Facilitator and a group Reporter for each group.
- The Reporter summarises the group's output and feeds back verbally to the entire class.

Suggested Exercises

This section offers a list of possible exercises related to the Goal. It is hoped that this list will stimulate your own ideas on creative exercises with which to engage pupils with the Goals. Use the list as a guide and modify the exercises in any way you consider to be appropriate for your pupils. You may feel that some exercises are more suited to older pupils. Your knowledge and experience will guide you here.

How Can We Evaluate Outcomes?

It is critical that we monitor our individual and whole school performance with respect to our Goals. Are we achieving our objectives?

Honest evaluation will motivate us to continue where we are doing well and take action in those areas where improvement is necessary. Essentially, we will never be fully satisfied with results because we are on a continuous improvement path and circumstances are constantly changing. Evaluation will sharpen our awareness in this area.

