



Introduction

Many schools follow a programme of key values throughout the school year. These values can be an important framework for helping to define and validate the work of the school 'beyond the curriculum'. Each value can be used as the theme for collective worship, the focus for classroom reflection and the subject matter for main hall or quiet corner displays.

The Bible has so much to offer in this area of positive personal, relational and community values, and its timeless wisdom can help all schools pass on to the next generation the qualities of life that are most valuable and which, as Christians, we believe are not only God-given but also can be God-energised in our lives.

Preparation

What follows is a series of ideas linked to the value of '**Responsibility**'.

It includes: key themes to explore, a key Bible verse to use, key concepts to unpack, ideas for displays and reflective corners, as well as Bible story links with further connections to material on the Barnabas websites.

Development

1. Key themes to explore

Taking responsibility for our actions - recognising when we are at fault, not trying to pass the blame on to someone else, owning up to our mistakes, having the courage to face the music

Taking responsibility for a task - being a responsible person, honouring another's trust in you, doing a job to the best of your ability, being a willing volunteer, seeing the job through, taking the blame if the job goes wrong

Taking responsibility for someone or something - looking after another person or a pet, making sure someone is properly looked after, being a reliable carer, not giving up halfway through, focusing attention on another's needs

Sharing responsibility for our environment - not leaving it up to others, playing your part in making the classroom, school and community a safer and better place, doing what you can to care for the world

2. Key Bible verses

We are called to be responsible stewards of God's creation:

Genesis 1:27 - God said to human beings, 'Fill the earth with people and look after it. Care for all

that I have made' (paraphrase).

And Jesus commanded his followers to 'care for one another, as I have cared for you' John 13: 34 (paraphrase).

3. Key concepts to unpack

Becoming responsible citizens means being people who can be trusted to do their best for the good of others.

Being responsible means being prepared to stand up on behalf of others and act and speak for them.

Being responsible means that others can expect you to make a sensible 'response' in a situation - you won't just give up or stay quiet. You will be ready to act.

An irresponsible person acts in a way that hurts others, doesn't care about their feelings, just does what pleases him/herself.

An irresponsible person refuses to face up to the damage or hurt that he or she may cause.

Responsibility is thinking about the good of everyone, not just what suits one individual.

Children are introduced to responsibility when:

- they are given a job to do in the class/school on behalf of others, for example, school council representative, monitor, buddy, the job of tidying up the classroom
- they are prepared to own up to something that they have done wrong
- they care for a younger sibling or friend
- they represent the school as part of a team or choir on a special occasion
- they have the job of looking after a pet, maybe at home or for the class

4. Display or reflective corner ideas

Include pictures of people who have responsible jobs and who care for the welfare of others, for example crossing patrol ladies/men, the police, security guards, childminders, travel guides, guide leaders, and so on.

Include references to responsible jobs in schools or in clubs such as school council representatives, a buddy scheme, team captains, a sixer in cubs, a prefect or house captain.

Include badges or certificates awarded for responsible positions.

Key questions to include:

Can I be trusted with an important job? How can I behave responsibly today? Who relies on me to act responsibly? Am I too quick to blame others for my mistakes? Am I ready to own up to what I've



done wrong?

Include a Bible verse, such as:

Cain says to God about his brother Abel: 'Am I supposed to look after my brother?' Genesis 4:9 (CEV).

I wonder what God's answer was?

5. **Some Bible story links**

- God gives human beings the responsibility of caring for the world and of naming the animals - see Genesis 2:4-20.
- The story of Cain and Abel - see Genesis 4:1-16.
- Jethro advises Moses to share the heavy responsibility of leadership - see Exodus 18:13-27.
- Moses hands over his responsibilities to Joshua - see Deuteronomy 31:1-8.
- Jesus gives responsibility to 72 followers to carry on his work - see Luke 10:1-9
- The church at Antioch gives Barnabas and Saul the responsibility of being missionaries - see Acts 13: 1-3; and they report back on a job well done in Acts 14: 27.
- God gives human beings a job to do - see Psalm 8:5-9.

6. **Ideas for collective worship and the classroom**

- [Cain and Abel](#)
- [Staying on Task](#)
- [Every day, a special job to do](#)