

EDUCATION MATTERS

February 2024

Education Matters is designed to provide parents and those interested in education with current “snippets” and links to information that might be of help in understanding and dealing with educational issues and bringing up children in a society that, on the whole, does not hold any respect for biblical teaching. Please contact us at enquiries@cvie.org.uk, if there are topics that you think would be interesting to cover in future editions of *Education Matters*.

In this edition we cover the following:

EDUCATION

- DfE Consultation: ‘Gender Questioning Children’
- Crumbling concrete, sexualisation and violence: how safe are our schools?
- Denying the greatest event in the history of the world
- One teacher’s faithful approach to the LGBT curriculum

ETHICAL AND SOCIETAL ISSUES

- Immunising students from bad ideas
- Different is good! God created male and female
- Parents, discipline your little children
- BBC Children in Need

TECHNOLOGY

- In the age of the smartphone, children aren’t performing as well
- You’ll smash your child’s smartphone after reading this
- A parent’s guide to TikTok (2023 Update)
- 11 practical ways to reduce digital consumption
- Parental controls: How to keep your child safe online
- Parents: To join social media is to witness death
- Why children should learn systematic theology
- How to help your children get excited about reading the Bible
- How to help your children establish Bible reading habits

RECENT BLOG POSTS AT THE CViE WEBSITE

[Education Secretary’s letter to parents: You have the right to see RSHE lesson material](#)

[CViE FEATURES: The Gospel Banner](#)

[The current RSHE issues are nothing new](#)



Christian Values in Education

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF CViE

Dear Friends and Supporters of Christian Values in Education,

As we reach the end of the first month of another year, we are reminded again of God's faithfulness. Despite our sin and shortcomings, He has provided, sustained and gone before us. However our path may be in providential matters, the way ahead is unknown and we realise our frailty and insignificance; yet we have so many promises to guide and direct. The Trustees met at the beginning of the year to plan and consider future projects for CViE, and our thoughts were guided by precious words in Exodus 33 where Moses sought the Lord's presence as he went forward, and the wonderful answer he received:

**I will make all my goodness pass before thee,
and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee;
and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious,
and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. Verse 19**

We extend our sincere best wishes to all our supporters for the year ahead and especially pray that the Lord's blessing will be with us. I also wish to thank you each for your kindness and generosity in whatever capacity. We have particular cause to thank the Lord for His goodness to CViE in the additional financial support that has been provided over the past 12 months, which has enabled us to consider a number of projects and to continue to employ our Business and Development Manager, for which we praise our God.

In this first 2024 issue of *Education Matters*, we have highlighted a number of ongoing issues including the impact of social media and smart technology, as well as the gender debate which continues to feature so much in the media and in our schools. Of special note is the DfE consultation on 'Gender Questioning'. Despite the many elements of this that we all find so disturbing and profoundly shocking, it is noteworthy that the Government have issued this request for a response to current issues. I would also draw your attention to the statement from the document which gives some hope that the vast majority feel that common sense should prevail over this matter, despite it still being a sad part of modern culture: *'Social transition is not a neutral act...information is needed about the outcomes for children who undertake degrees of social transition. This means that schools and colleges should take a cautious approach and that decisions should never be taken in haste or without the involvement of parents. Schools and colleges should consider how best to fulfil their safeguarding duties towards the child who is making such a request and their peers, ensuring that any agreed course of action is in all of their best interests.'* **Please can I urge you to respond to the consultation, the details of which are below.**

We hope to hold further Zoom meetings this year, the first of which will address issues in the gender debate which is increasingly prevalent in schools, as well as how we can speak to our children on the delicate issues surrounding the RSE curriculum. The first will be with Julie Maxwell from Lovewise, which will take place on **Friday 1st March at 8 p.m.**, God Willing. Further details will be sent very soon.

No doubt many of us observe the perilous nature of the international scene as well as the imploding of so many sanctities of life which are debated without let or hindrance in our country. We wonder what may yet come to pass with conflicts spreading, as well as the political uncertainties that loom in the UK and in the US. We pray that each of us will be given grace to look to Christ and to find our refuge in Him, knowing that He is our all sufficiency. Dr Fawcett's hymn, well known to many of us, is an encouragement in the new year we have started:

*'Whatever distress awaits us below,
Such plentiful grace will Jesus bestow
As still shall support us and silence our fear,
For nothing can hurt us while Jesus is near.'*

May we know His grace and help in all our ways.

With Christian greetings,
Dan Sayers

CViE Chair
www.cvie.org.uk

EDUCATION

DfE Consultation: 'Gender Questioning Children'

In December 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) published guidance for schools and colleges in England – titled 'Gender Questioning Children' – on how to support children and students who may be questioning their gender. The guidance is now open for public consultation until 12 March 2024 (you can participate in the [online survey](#)). CViE offers an overview on the [website](#) that points out those aspects that might be of interest to or an encouragement for Christians.

Crumbling concrete, sexualisation and violence: how safe are our schools?

This is [a serious article](#) from Christian Concern on what is described as “the sad reality that many children are currently not safe in school”. Given the undeniable truth that the safety of children is the first concern of parents - it is important to consider the following question: can we assume that the schools of our nation are, on the whole, safe? These concerns are in the context of reports that many children report fearing harm while at school.

Denying the greatest event in the history of the world

For centuries, our calendar was based around the birth of Christ - before His birth BC (before Christ) and after His birth AD (Latin meaning “Anno Domini” for “In the year of the Lord”). But today, academics have adopted [an alternative terminology](#), changing to BCE (before the Common Era), and CE (Common Era). The change has been pushed in the halls of academia, and there is really no doubt about the secular motivations.

One teacher's faithful approach to LGBT curriculum

A teacher who was required to teach "The LGBT Community" in my English secondary school, to year 9 shares his helpful approach to the task as one seeking to honour both his employment and his faith. (hyperlink fails - cut and paste <https://twitter.com/FishHutBlackDog/status/1714960126824550852>)

ETHICAL AND SOCIETAL ISSUES

Immunising students from bad ideas

Christian parents think about how best to pass faith onto their children. A significant aspect of the battle for the hearts and minds of the next generation has to do with ideas. This article suggests that passing on a Christian worldview to our children requires more than just telling them the truth. Christian parents must not only present the truth to their children; they must find ways to immunise them against lies. Bad ideas are compared to viruses - the more exposure one has to bad ideas in a controlled setting, the less likely they are to fall for those ideas later (and the inverse). Those who were the easiest and the hardest to dupe were surprising – read the article [here](#).

Different is good! God created male and female

This [article](#) celebrates what God has done in complementarity. God created males and females to be very different from each other and offers reasons for the differences between boys and girls that aren't a product of the shallow secular idea of social conditioning. It draws on a summary of scientific studies of the human body and their implications by psychologist and medical doctor Leonard Sax in the book *Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know about the Emerging Science of Sex Differences*.

Christian Values in Education

Parents, discipline your little children

Many would consider a common modern problem to be the insufficient discipline of children. The tension between a permissive culture and the unpleasantness of administering discipline may lead parents to err on the side of lenience. “But lenience like severity, is still an error” says [this article](#) that makes the case to recover the biblical paradigm of loving but firm physical discipline. This topic is very current in the UK, as Wales has outlawed the discipline of children, but Christians know that children do not know what is best for them – rather, **Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child** (Proverbs 22:15). What the Bible says on this matter is vitally important for healthy children and families.

BBC Children in Need

Every parent faces being asked by their children for the pound coin required to participate in a school non-uniform day - the stigma of being in uniform on such a day is awful. In many ways, though officially 'voluntary', there is a virtual compulsion, since the peer pressure is overwhelming. Are our supporters aware [where that money goes](#)? People give to these charity events 'on trust', and that trust may not be well-placed.

TECHNOLOGY

In the age of the smartphone, our children aren't performing as well

[Recent statistics](#) seem to indicate a general decline in student performance around the world over the last decade and a half. The most pronounced declines were in math and reading happening, and cannot be explained by closures due the coronavirus, for the trajectory was already downward beforehand. The author pointed to “digital distractions” as a possible culprit.

'You'll smash your child's smartphone after reading this'

[This article](#) sets out how TikTok is turning a segment of American youth toward a moral equivalence between Israel and Hamas in suggesting that bin Laden was right to murder 3,000 people on 9/11. Most Christians will not be aware that one of TikTok's jobs is to provide sensitive data to its Communist Chinese parent company, ByteDance. What presents as a platform for amusing short video clips lurks a malign hand that one writer discusses in an article entitled, '[The Childrens Are NOT Okay](#)'. No Christian young person should access this app.

A parent's guide to TikTok (2023 Update)

[This guide](#) tells more about TikTok and is also a useful complement to [Steve Pearce's talk](#) at the CViE National Conference in explaining what it is. Features include a 'dangers' and a 'what you can do' section.

11 practical ways to reduce digital consumption

[The author argues](#) that a healthy mind and spirit must have a plan for getting our digital devices and social media under control. All the research indicates that the overuse and misuse of digital technology is one of the greatest causes of mental and emotional distress today, especially among teens. Science shows that overuse of digital technology reduces attention spans, concentration, reasoning skills, IQ, brain density, emotional resilience, and the length and quality of our sleep. This is in addition to the harm from excessive use of social media.

Christian Values in Education

Parental controls: How to keep your child safe online

With children spending more time connected to the internet, it's important that they stay safe online and understand how to use the internet responsibly. [Broadband parental controls](#) can be a handy way of protecting your children from harmful sites. There are plenty of benefits of your child being online, such as learning and staying connected to friends, but there are also some considerations to be wary of.

Parents: To join social media is to witness death

Do you remember the first time you viewed death? It should have been shocking and disturbing, and requires levels of maturity to process. This 'control' has been removed, and now we are seeing the aftermath of brutality on a daily basis, and the danger is real that it will all become rather ordinary, rather banal. [This article](#) points out the hard truth that our children cannot un-see what is seen.

Other Education Matters

Why children should learn systematic theology

This is a 'catch the eye' title for [an article](#) and it makes a rather exciting and challenging (in the right way) case for Christians to bring an area of instruction to bear in our Sunday schools and other settings that our supporters operate in that may have previously been thought too lofty or difficult. The idea is that, "a relationship with God begins through the knowledge of the truth. Therefore, theology is for everyone because theology is not an abstract theory but a personal endeavour to know the supreme being in the universe." There are suggested resources, potentially useful for a teacher of young people's Bible class/Sunday school.

How to help your children in reading the Bible

It is not uncommon for Christian parents to have professing children who still struggle to regularly read the Bible. [This article](#) recognizes the real obstacles, and offers helpful advice in encouraging one of the most important enduring disciplines for any child.

How to help your children establish Bible reading habits

This is a light and simple and [helpful encouragement](#) to our supporters with children to do this very important - even central - task of a Christian parent.

Forthcoming events

CViE National Conference 2024 - Save the date!

Lord-willing, the Conference will be held on **Saturday, September 28** from 10:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the King's Centre, Coppard Gardens, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 2GZ.

We extend a warm invitation to all those who have a concern and/or interest in the education of children and young people to join us at this year's CViE National Conference.

Christian Values in Education

Finally ...

Please let us know if there are any topics that you feel should be covered in *Education Matters*. If you come across any issues at all that may be of interest to supporters of CViE, please let us know by emailing: enquiries@cvie.org.uk.

We would acknowledge the Lord's goodness in providing for the work of CViE, and if you are able to contribute to our continued work please [donate here](#).

The Lord grant us a spirit of prayer, that He might help parents and those involved in education to hold fast to the Word of God and that He might watch over children and young people and keep them from the dangers that would corrupt them.

[NOTE: Although we make every effort to ensure these links mentioned are accurate, up to date and relevant, CViE cannot take responsibility for content and pages maintained by external providers, nor do we endorse all information, religious views or opinions posted on these third-party websites.]