

Toybox

Toybox Statement of Christian Ethos

Toybox is a Christian charity committed to helping street living and street working children and those at risk of becoming so, principally in Latin America.

Our vision is of a world where there are no street children, where families are restored, those who are disadvantaged have choices and hope and all children have a voice.

Our mission is to bring lasting and positive change to the lives of street children, street working children and those at risk of becoming so, through front line work, prevention and advocacy, being a facilitator and enabler, galvanising people and resources in the UK, Latin America and worldwide.

The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew ch25 v40.)

See also Toybox Vision, Mission, Values and Working Principles statement.

1 Basis of Faith

Toybox became a member of Evangelical Alliance (EA) on 23rd May 1995 and we have maintained our membership since that date. The charity continues its link with fellow evangelical Christians through membership of the EA, to whose Basis of Faith Toybox assents.

The Trustees of Toybox have reviewed the EA Statement of Faith and confirm the adoption of the Statement as its Basis of Faith:

1. The one true God who lives eternally in three persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
2. The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.
3. The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which are the written Word of God—fully trustworthy for faith and conduct.
4. The dignity of all people, made male and female in God's image to love, be holy and care for creation, yet corrupted by sin, which incurs divine wrath and judgement.
5. The incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ—born of the Virgin Mary; truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.
6. The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God.
7. The bodily resurrection of Christ, the first fruits of our resurrection; his ascension to the Father, and his reign and mediation as the only Saviour of the world.
8. The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
9. The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.
10. The Church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the priesthood of all believers—given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice and love.
11. The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God, who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.

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2 Employment and Volunteering with Toybox

For all senior positions at Toybox and all roles requiring interface with our supporters and staff involved in marketing and fundraising activity it is a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) to be a committed Christian. The justification for applying the GOR exemption provision of the Religion or Belief Discrimination Regulations for certain posts and the criteria upon which a GOR is set out below (and in the Toybox Justification Statement). If a role does not specifically state the need for a GOR it is still understood that all posts require an acceptance to work within the Christian ethos and values of the organisation.

3 What we believe

Every organisation is motivated by its chosen criteria – e.g. profit, social concern, compassion, human rights, knowledge, environment, politics, beliefs/values, religion. These criteria will determine the values by which the organisation achieves its objectives. Since its foundation Toybox has been motivated by a belief in the sovereignty of God, a concern for the glory of God, a concern for the poor and the desire to follow the Christian doctrinal basis adopted at the outset and as set out in the Basis of Faith.

The Christian motivation of Toybox is combined with high quality professional services which result in an holistic approach to professional and spiritual matters in the belief that each person is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27) and therefore has value and dignity.

Toybox Christian ethos is given life through our relationships and the way we work together. It is through these relationships with each other in the UK and internationally and those whom we seek to serve, that we practice our ethos. This is underpinned by Toybox Vision, Mission, Values and Working Principles which apply to our relationships in the UK and internationally.

Toybox operates on the understanding that our activities are simply an outworking of our faith; that our “doing” derives directly from our “being”. There is an essential and indissoluble link between the inner and the outer, the private life and the public face of Toybox. The link between who we are and what we do cannot be broken.

The core of Christian commitment is an active and consistent relationship with God derived from a personal experience of salvation. When the relationship with God is in good order, relationships with other people will also benefit. The Bible provides Christians with strong principles to guide them in living their lives. A culture based on effective and genuine relationships ensures a successful and motivated workforce.

The organisation depends upon its staff to maintain positive relationships with its range of key stakeholders including:

- The street children, street working children and children at risk we seek to help (Christian and non-Christian)
- Christian and non Christian parents, relatives and friends of the children we seek to help and support
- Our co-working partners in Latin America, local projects, local churches and communities in the countries we work
- A wide range of churches from different denominations in the UK and internationally

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- Over 21,000 individuals, the majority of whom are Christians, supporting the work of the organisation, receive regular communications. These supporters give prayer and financial support
- The wider Christian community where the organisation contributes to growth, development and raising awareness of issues surrounding street children.
- Advocates, volunteers and those in other international development agencies both Christian and non Christian.

4 Commitment to the Poor

We are called specifically to serve street children, street working children and children at high risk. We aim to relieve their suffering and to promote the transformation of their condition of life.

We seek to understand the situation of children on the street or in danger of becoming street children seeking to work in partnership with those who help them and working alongside them towards fullness of life. We share our discovery of eternal hope in Jesus Christ. We stand in solidarity in a common search for justice.

We respect the children we seek to help and the local partner organisations as active participants, not passive recipients, in this relationship. We believe we can learn from each other and how God is working through the wider ministry. The need for transformation is common to all. As with other agencies, missions and the church together we share a quest for justice, peace, reconciliation and healing in a broken world.

5 Leadership

Here as elsewhere, Toybox's approach to leadership is rooted in principles found in Scripture. Some of these principles are exemplified through the life of Jesus Christ in His role as leader. These include: Being clearly focused; acting with total consistence; having absolute integrity; showing unprejudiced compassion; being an encourager; being unwaveringly committed to the task and seeking to live a balanced life style.

Each person with leadership responsibility in Toybox is expected to apply contemporary professional and Biblical principles in exercising their role. To assist managers with this and to develop a consistent approach across the organisation, all people holding leadership posts are required to attend and have active involvement with a recognised Christian church.

6 Policies and Procedures

Maintaining and developing appropriate policies, procedures and guidance documents will ensure that the organisation continuously reflects new legislation, current professional practice and non-statutory regulatory requirements.

In addition policies will aim to reflect Biblical standards and principles. As new policies are introduced or updated Toybox will look to reflect Biblical principles and understanding so that the Christian Ethos and understanding is reflected in each policy.

The organisation's Justification Statement explains how the Christian Ethos will be maintained through the appointment of skilled and competent employees.

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7 Standards

Standards are important to the corporate life of an organisation. Toybox recognises and respects outstanding levels of service in other organisations. It is determined that the Christian values, structures and policies it espouses for itself will result in services which are, at least, equal to the best available elsewhere. We will achieve this by positively influencing every aspect of customer service, partnership, communications, marketing and fundraising. And in this matter its primary criterion will be the benefit received by the street children served by Toybox.

8 Prayer

Individual and collective prayer is a key expression of Christian faith. As a Christian organisation prayer influences every aspect of its activity.

An opportunity for all members of staff to contribute to regular prayer times is a standard requirement at our UK office and recognised throughout our international work. Times for prayer are also part of staff meetings, training events, and other corporate events and may be part of specific 'prayer days'.

9 Servanthood

One of the key aspects of the life of a committed Christian is the desire to serve others. This inspiration and requirement is rooted in the example of the Lord Jesus Christ who is often described as 'The Servant King'.

In Toybox the principle of servanthood is encouraged at all levels so as to provide something distinctive in the work we undertake. Servanthood is foundational to scripture and is viewed as a positive approach in that it fosters respect, value and genuine concern for others. Servanthood is an emphasis in training and development opportunities within the organisation.

As agreed by Toybox Trustees at the Trustee Board meeting held on 20th April 2009