

Outcome 2 exemplars



Outcome	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Not yet meeting expectations
	ePortfolio demonstrates a high level of critical reflection on your learning journey and in depth consideration of the implications of your learning for your contribution to Lutheran education.	ePortfolio provides critical reflection on your learning journey and can identify the implications for your contribution to Lutheran education.	ePortfolio describes the learning journey with minimal reflection and consideration of the implications of your learning for your role. (To be addressed before accreditation can be awarded)
Analyse and describe the ways Lutheran theological perspectives can shape practices in an early years' service, school or classroom.	Demonstrates in-depth understanding of a theological concept with astute analysis of ways it can shape practice with specific examples from your context.	Demonstrates understanding of a theological concept with analysis of ways it can shape practice in your context.	Demonstrates minimal appropriate theological understanding with general description of the ways a theological concept can shape practice.

Exemplar one

Analyse and describe the ways Lutheran theological perspectives can shape practices in a classroom

Lutheran schools are places of grace – driven by grace. So, it is vital that we define what grace is as it is such an important part of our world. Grace is God giving us salvation, all we have to do is accept, because we will never be worthy of achieving it.

From this grace, Lutheran education is about offering students and families warm, caring relationships and a safe environment. This school-wide principle is important because at its core, Lutheran's value learning as God's gift. It is part of what makes the Lutheran church special and unique. Within these overarching beliefs, and whilst we behave as a whole, we see all the students as being unique with their own particular gifts and needs. This means that we come from a unified place of compassion and service, but aim to deliver it to all pupils on their own level.

Grace is a fundamental part of classroom interactions. As a Year 8 core teacher, I saw the pupils frequently throughout the day. Getting to know the pupils (through first lesson

questionnaires and on-going conversations with students, parents and from other staff members) allowed me to learn how the students felt about the subjects, themselves, their work, their home lives, their issues and their passions. Understanding some of these things about each pupil allowed me to support them as best I could and helped me to understand any issues they were having with their ability to focus, concentrate, complete homework, wear the right uniform etc. This understanding of the whole child and teaching the whole child is what grace is about in our day to day. The ability to see past the constraints of the “law” – be that deadlines, uniform policy, behaviour – and really interact with the child to build positive relationships and set them on a successful path to learning.

As a Christian Studies teacher the Lutheran theology clearly shaped my classroom practise. From the explicit teaching junior pupils literally about the bible and parables, to the implicit teaching of seniors in the discussion of grace and law or slavery, we are able to guide the minds and morality of the pupils in our care. It also allowed me time to teach them implicitly, if we want them to relax and unwind to focus on their souls and core, we need to time it so it does not run in to things that cause them stress, so bringing an open classroom, which appreciates truth, honesty and respect allows them to learn how grace can be exhibited in themselves and in others.

Exemplar two

OUTCOME 2 ANALYSE AND DESCRIBE THE WAYS LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES CAN SHAPE PRACTICE IN A SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM.

For the purposes of demonstrating this outcome I will focus on the following enduring understanding:

- Lutheran education is centred in the belief that God invites all people to join God in ongoing creation and care for the universe.

And the following guiding question:

- How does creation theology inform the why and how of Lutheran education?

Connect has provided scope to consider the theological underpinnings of the ‘why and how’ of Lutheran education. These underpinnings were made particularly clear by the Lutheran Lens outlined on page 7 of the Lutheran Education Leadership and Formation Framework document Growing Deep1 , which situates the work of school leaders, teachers, and community members alike within the lived reality of key theological concepts such as: - Grace - Sharing in and living the Good News of Jesus Christ - The Holy Spirit - The Relationship between the individual, God, and others in the community - The Importance of Hope, Love and Forgiveness - God as creator and His invitation to join in the ongoing creation and care of the universe. In responding to the guiding question “How does creation theology inform the why and how of Lutheran education?” I reflect on the discussion of the final point, creation theology. I found the opportunity to discuss how creation theology can sit alongside scientific understandings of the world to be particularly thought provoking. Reflecting on my own faith journey prior to the commencement of Connect, I had some misgivings about how my faith, especially within organised religion can be reconciled with the state of the world we see around us today. I had become critical of those who use excuses such as ‘God’s plan’ to legitimise inaction on key world issues such as poverty, climate change and human rights such as the right to asylum. Understanding how creation theology expects active contribution and shared responsibility in caring for ourselves, each other, and the world around us reminded me that is important to lead by example and be the change we want to see in our communities. It also reminded me that the actions of individuals within any one faith or institution must not be considered representative of an entire faith. Importantly, the reflection enabled me to shine a light on whether my emerging dissatisfaction with world events was in line with the capabilities and attitudes espoused in the Growing Deep framework.

As I begin to reflect on my thinking in 2019, a shift has occurred as I begin to view creation theology as a living practice which requires us to be the change we want to see. In session two, I reflect that on creation theology today: Recognition of continual co-creation as members of community cannot ignore the obvious relationship with service and vocation. Indeed, these concepts are also fundamental to the Lutheran understanding of our place in the world around us. The notions of service and vocation were further explored in Connect through the Pathways handout reading Vocationally Thinking. I found this article resonated with many ideas I hold about the world, reaffirming my belief in contributing to a system of education which values service and community above, but not to the exclusion of individual achievement. In particular, the following quote struck a chord with me:

“Lutheran schools also have to deal with the challenge in contemporary educational thinking which links education closely with preparation for the workplace but with emphasis strongly on individual benefit rather than service to society”

The Connect sessions have provided scope for me to consider how my current thought processes and responses serve me, but more importantly whether they serve those in the community around me. This thinking has reaffirmed the importance of my journey in education and in life not as work, but as a ‘vocation in service of others’.

Exemplar 3 Grace

I had been a dancer from the age of 5 – 15 and heard the adjective graceful more times than I could count. I'd always associated it with a movement that was fluid, a posture that was strong and an appearance that caught the attention for all the right reasons. I had previously thought the word grace was a way people treated others. I previously thought this meant being kind and doing the right thing.

Through my Session One and professional development working at Calvary Lutheran Primary I have begun exploring a very different understanding of the word. The central recurrent theme of Lutheranism is: *'Lutherans are justified by grace through faith'* (Christenson, p45). Christianity.com states, *'Grace is the love*

of God shown to the unlovely; the peace of God given to the restless; the unmerited favor of God.' (Christianity.com). The Skit guys refer to grace as *'God's crazy love'* which really resonates with me as it doesn't make sense and it is where God loves us so much even though we don't deserve it.

Grace means that God loves all people no matter who they are or what they have done. *"Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more . . . and there is nothing we can do to make God love us less."* (Philip Yancey). I think this is really an important concept for students. I remind my students regularly that they are unique creations of God and loved by God. They are created just the way they are meant to be with a special mix of gifts and abilities.

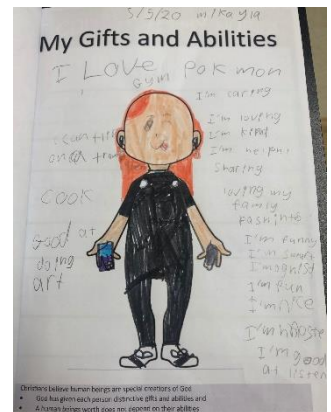
Following my exploration of the grace resources I developed a deeper understanding of grace. I created a devotion where students explored their



Staff devotion example showing their unique gifts and abilities

own gifts and abilities and how these made them unique and special. I was able to support children who compared themselves to others and thought they had no gifts or talents. I was able to remind them that Christians believe that God loves each of us and has blessed us with different abilities and all of these abilities are needed and used by God to help us care and serve each other. Gifts of caring for others are just as important as being able to paint creatively, play the piano beautifully or play sport well. God loves all people, and no one is more special than another. *You are special* by Max Lucado on the Session 1 padlet was a great resource.

I also duplicated this devotion for staff where I initially had staff reflect on their unique gifts and abilities then had other staff members add their observations of that person's unique gifts and abilities. It was the most comfortable I felt doing a staff devotion and by far the most rewarding one I have done.



Student example showing their unique gifts and abilities

Within a school setting we practice restorative practices where we reflect the love of God, God's grace, in our relationships with others. We do this when we listen to one another, care for one another and allowing a space for forgiveness during times of conflict. Grace is both a valuable and challenging concept for Lutheran schools. It is helpful as we look to help each student feel loved and special. It is also challenging as even though we are loved we will make mistakes and hurt others, and this can have consequences. This is when God's grace inspires us to forgive ourselves and each other.