

St. John's Cof E (VA) Primary School
Policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social
and Cultural Development.

Date adopted: 22 January 2008

Review: January 2010

This Policy is carried out within the context and spirit of the school's Mission Statement. It supports and reinforces the aims of St. John's C of E (VA) Primary School, valuing all children equally and as individuals.

This policy relates to the whole life of the school. Of particular importance in promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is the example set by adults in the school, the quality of relationships and the standard of daily Collective Worship.

Within all aspects of school life, including all the subjects of the curriculum, playtimes, after school clubs and special events, the ethos of the school and elements of SMSC must be experienced. In particular activities, such as RE lessons, Collective Worship, and PSHE lessons, the development of positive values and attitudes and the opportunities for SMSC should be exploited.

Our aims are to:

- Promote pupils' SMSC development through all aspects of school life and all curriculum subjects
- Give pupils experience of the Christian view of humanity and help pupils appreciate human achievements and aspirations;
- Help pupils develop as people who will be able to make thoughtful judgements and decisions in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural realms of life.

DEFINITIONS

The SMSC aspects of education concentrate on the development of the pupil as an individual and as a personality, aiming to enrich and extend the human existence of each child in relation to the values, attitudes, beliefs and consequent behaviour acquired during school years. SMSC will be experienced by all children at their own level of understanding and staff should be aware of this and sensitive to it.

Spiritual development: Understanding of self and others is at the heart of spiritual development and relates to the search for meaning and purpose in our existence. It is associated with a dimension of life which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses, but has much to do with feelings and emotions, and attitudes and beliefs. Spiritual development, is, therefore, accessible to everyone. All areas of the curriculum should contribute to pupils' spiritual development. As a church school, we place special emphasis on the specific teaching and beliefs of the Christian faith, both within the daily life of the school and through the curriculum. Opportunities which promote spiritual development may take the form of:

- Reflection
- Intellectual curiosity
- Study and discussion
- Experience of awe and wonder
- Exercise of imagination and intuition
- Discussion and debate
- Engagement in prayer, worship and reflection.

Moral development is concerned with pupils' ability to make judgements about how they should behave and act and the reasons for such behaviour. It refers to their knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes in relation to what is right or wrong. The system of rules and codes of behaviour established in our school is an important early introduction to issues of fairness for all and to the consequences of operating outside the accepted rule system. Pupils are encouraged to understand the need for a common code and to follow it from conviction rather than because of consequences or sanctions. Moral development, based on Christian principles, should enable pupils to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and behaviour. Opportunities which promote moral development may take the form of:

- Reflection on moral rules and share values
- Analyzing the consequences of their own actions
- Developing the qualities of empathy and self discipline
- Exercising moral reasoning and making choices about their actions
- Discussion about right and wrong in relation to current issues

Social development refers to the development of abilities and qualities that pupils need to acquire if they are to play a full and active part in society. It also relates to the growth of knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects. The school, but in particular the classroom, provides a suitable environment for promoting social development within a Christian context. Pupils learn to lead, to use their initiative and to use individual skills and strengths when working together towards a common goal. The ability to be led, to support others and to recognise the different skills of other group members can be developed when children work co-operatively. Opportunities which promote social development may take the form of:

- Encouraging pupils to think critically
- Informing pupils of key and political issues
- Discussion and debate
- Taking on roles
- Participation in the 'democratic process' in the life of their communities.

Cultural development refers to the development of knowledge and understanding of differing cultural beliefs, customs and traditions. At the heart of cultural development lies the necessity to develop a sense of personal identity, whilst at the same time acquiring awareness, understanding and tolerance regarding the cultural traditions of others. In order to make provision for cultural development, existing knowledge, interests and experiences are strengthened and then built upon further. In this way pupils gain a deeper understanding of their own culture and the factors which influence it and gain a broader understanding of other cultures and cultural influences. All areas of the curriculum can be used to promote and develop cultural awareness, although the arts, are those used more frequently. Opportunities which promote cultural development may take the form of:

- Learning about the diversity of cultures and practices and cultural change
- Experiencing and appreciating various forms of artist expression
- Recognizing moral dimensions
- Developing a set of socially acceptable values and principles
- Questioning
- Celebrating
- Distinguishing between right and wrong
- Articulating own attitudes and beliefs.

Our Christian distinctiveness permeates the four definitions of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the objectives of all other policies. We provide a Christian environment which enables pupils to become aware of and reflect upon their own experiences and those of others; and to discover meaning and value in such experiences which might reveal the love and presence of God. We consider it important to foster a personal, caring and happy environment. We are committed to teaching and living the Christian way of life and developing respect and consideration for all members of the community.

Assessment - Children's progress of SMSC is not assessed formally. However, staff will informally assess children's progress and the delivery of SMSC opportunities. The attached appendix contains the specific aims for each area of SMSC, the provision and some assessment opportunities.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

Other policies are closely linked to SMSC development such as the

- Personal, Social and Health Education Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- RE Policy
- Collective Worship
- Anti Bullying policy,
- Racial Equality and Cultural Diversity policy
- Individual Curriculum policies

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Education Reform Act (1988) requires the curriculum of a maintained school to 'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school.' Provision for SMSC development is inspected by both OFSTED and Section 48 inspectors.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ensuring that the Church Foundation of the school is honoured and that the SMSC
- Policy promotes an ethos based on Christian principles and practice.
- ensuring that the SMSC is put into practice and monitored appropriately
- engaging an appropriate inspector to carry out the Section 48 Inspection of a Church School.

Monitoring and evaluating spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an on-going process. There should, however, be some arrangement whereby formal discussion and evaluation can take place regularly, ensuring that all staff participate. The HT has responsibility for overseeing the provision, the monitoring and evaluation of SMSC development and understands the impact that good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development can have on the school as a whole. Staff meetings may be used for discussion and the update of information.

Appendix

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Aims for Spiritual Development – To develop the ability to:

- be quiet
- listen and be still (physically and mentally)
- transcend the mundane
- sense the sacred, the holy, the Divine
- reflect;
- use all one's senses
- sense wonder and mystery in the world
- sense the special nature of human relationships
- find an inner confidence and peace

Provision for Spiritual Development

Staff provide a role model for the children by sharing in the joy of discovery and in the mystery of creation. As individuals, they may share something of their own spirituality with both colleagues and pupils. The school encourages pupils to express their creativity and imagination; foster a sense of respect for the integrity of each person; and aims to create an atmosphere which enables pupils and staff to speak freely about their beliefs.

Within the Curriculum, pupils will be able to explore:

- an imaginative approach to the world;
- a spirit of enquiry and open-mindedness;
- an approach to the holy or the sacred;
- an awareness of order and pattern in the world.

Within RE, Worship and PSHE, the school will:

- allow pupils to investigate and reflect upon their own beliefs and values;
- provide opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the 'darker' side of life e.g. superstitions and bereavement;
- provide opportunities for prayer/reflection/silence, the exploration of inner space;
- encourage a balance of music, speech, silence and the creative arts when exploring spiritual development.
- explore the case of symbol, image, allegory and metaphor in the curriculum;
- explore what commitment means;
- always invite a response and never coerce.

Beyond the Formal Curriculum, the school will:

- encourage pupils in personal conversations and during discussions in lessons, to express such feelings as transcendence, wonder, transience and change, paradox and unease, injustice or inequality whilst listening carefully to others' questions and responses;
- treat pupils, staff and governors with respect, regardless of personal feelings;
- invite close involvement with the church, and regular participation in church services.

Assessment in Spiritual Development

- becoming aware of God in one's own life and in the life of others
- becoming aware of and reflecting on experience
- questioning and exploring the meaning of experience
- understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations
- developing personal views and insights and a grasp of the intangible
- applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to one's own life

- acquiring a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion.
 - development is best seen through pupil's relationships and conversations with others
- We should aim to encourage pupils to experience all the above within the context and practice of the Christian faith.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Aims for Moral Development

- to understand the principles lying behind decisions and actions
- to be able to take moral decisions for themselves
- to assume moral responsibility through belief and conviction
- to be able to distinguish between right and wrong

Objectives for Moral Development

- to tell the truth
- to respect the rights and property of others
- to keep a promise
- to help those less fortunate than ourselves
- to act considerately towards others
- to take responsibility for one's own actions
- to exercise self-discipline
- to develop high expectations
- to develop positive attitudes
- to conform to rules and regulations for the good of all

Provision for Moral Development

Within the Curriculum

- encouraging pupils to develop a personal view on ethical questions raised.
- developing responsibility in learning and setting personal targets

Within RE, Worship and PSHE, religious education lessons emphasise the Christian moral perspective whilst also offering models of morality in other faiths

Beyond the Formal Curriculum, the school will set high expectations through formal discussion which will lead to raised awareness of high moral standards inside and outside the classroom.

Assessment in Moral Development

Assessment is primarily through observation of pupil behaviour and the views pupils express.

Do pupils demonstrate:

- an understanding of moral principles which allow them to tell right from wrong?
- a respect for other people, truth, justice and property?
- an ability to stand moral ground in the face of peer pressure?

Pupils should move gradually from a 'taught morality' to taking responsibility for their own moral decisions.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Aims for Social Development

- to relate positively to others
- to participate fully and take responsibility in the classroom and in the school
- to use appropriate behaviour, according to situations
- to engage successfully in partnership with others
- to exercise personal responsibility and initiative
- to understand that, as individuals, we depend on family, school and society

Objectives for Social Development

- to share such emotions as love, joy, hope, anguish, fear and reverence
- to show sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others
- to work as part of a group
- to interact positively with others through contacts outside school, eg. sporting activities, visits, church services, music festivals etc.
- to develop an understanding of citizenship and to experience being part of a whole caring community
- to show care and consideration for others by sharing and taking turns
- to realise there are things each person can do well

Provision for Social Development

Within the Curriculum

- listening to the viewpoints and ideas of others
- working with others to complete tasks collaboratively, particularly when faced with challenges

Within RE, Worship and PSHE good behaviour is praised positively and rewarded publicly through Red Badge commendations each week

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

- pastoral care from all staff gives pupils the chance to see caring in action
- opportunities to welcome or give a vote of thanks to visitors or when making a visit
- visits from an anti-drugs drama group

Assessment in Social Development

- observation of pupils' growing maturity and self-esteem
 - the degree to which pupils employ socially acceptable behaviour
 - development of relationships in work and play
 - the degree to which pupils appreciate what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.
- The importance of the link between relationships and behaviour should be emphasised. The quality of relationships between teachers, pupils, support staff, parents and governors, at all levels, is crucial. These relationships will be characterised by mutual respect, by positive attitudes, by the willingness to listen and understand and by the valuing of pupils.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Aims for Cultural Development

The aims and objectives of cultural development relate to differing aspects of the word 'culture.'

- to develop a sense of belonging to pupils' own culture and being proud of their cultural background
- to respond to cultural events
- to share different cultural experiences
- to respect different cultural traditions
- to celebrate our cultural differences
- to understand codes of behaviour, fitting to cultural tradition

Objectives for Cultural Development

- to develop an awareness and recognition of what a 'cultured person' appreciates in terms of music, art, drama, literature etc
- to develop a love of learning
- to develop an understanding of British cultural tradition, including Christianity
- to appreciate the values and customs of other ethnic and faith groups which make up modern British society, and the world beyond

- to develop the ability to value current cultural enthusiasms, icons, music and media, critically and independently of peer pressure.

Provision for Cultural Development

Within the Curriculum

- acquiring a code of behaviour when visiting a church or churchyard for study
- learning about another culture presented through a cross-curricular approach
- being presented with positive role models from a variety of cultures

Within RE, Worship and PSHE, opportunities to discuss and explore differences, similarities, equal rights, peer pressure and discrimination.

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

- , story tellers and musicians from a variety of cultures
- ensuring that positive role models are presented to all learners.

Assessment in Cultural Development

response to stories, videos, artefacts

- records of work, displays, photographic evidence
- increased participation in cultural activities
- attitudes expressed during cultural visits or relating to visitors.

It is hoped that our children will develop a balanced approach to retaining the traditions of our Christian society, whilst perceiving in a positive light the contribution of other cultures, past and present