



Be the best I can  
in the love of Christ

# **Policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education** including the promoting of fundamental **British values**

## **At St. Mary's School we aim to:**

- Create a caring Christian community in which everyone is valued and able to learn and grow together;
- Inspire all our children to develop enquiring minds and a lifelong love of learning;
- Release potential through a broad and creative curriculum;
- Sustain an environment in which independence, respect and resilience will flourish;
- Nurture strong relationships between home, school, church and the wider community;
- Empower the children to become responsible local, national and global citizens.

**"Be the best I can in the love of Christ"**

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

## **1. Introduction**

Our mission statement requires us to create a caring Christian community in which everyone is valued and able to grow in the love of Christ. In order to do this, children must have opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.

At St Mary's CE Primary School we recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve and underpins school life. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the cultures.

"It is crucial for individual pupils and it is crucial for society as a whole. Most teachers would see it as the heart of what education is all about – helping pupils grow and develop as people."

([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk))

As part of our SMSC curriculum, we also promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Through successful implementation of this policy, the school can show it meets the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002.

## **2. The nature of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education**

The school provides pupils with the maximum scope to develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of life, through creating and promoting an atmosphere of co-operation, positivity, sensitivity to others and respect. This is also reflected within other policies.

At St Mary's CE Primary School children will:

- Develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- Accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- To acquire broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services of England;
- Develop tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling the children to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- Show respect for other people; and
- Show respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

This policy should be read alongside the policies for PSHE and Collective Worship.

### **3. Spiritual development**

'Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence which are of enduring worth.' (OFSTED)

It is recognised that for some spiritual development can only be described from a faith perspective. For others, spirituality is expressed in terms of non-religious values and commitments.

Spiritual development is fundamental to the development of the individual. The school provides pupils with knowledge and insights into values and beliefs, and enables them to reflect on their experiences in a way which develops their spiritual awareness and self knowledge.

The school endorses the recommendations of the diocesan guidance for SMSC and recognises that spirituality may be found in a variety of religious traditions or in ways not dependent upon a religious tradition at all. However within the school's curriculum, spiritual development may happen as a planned activity or be spontaneous.

### **4. Spiritual Education will be promoted by:**

#### **An attitude to life based on:**

- A development of personal beliefs including religious beliefs
- An appreciation that people have both individual and shared beliefs on which they base their lives
- A growing awareness of the way in which personal understanding contributes to personal identity
- An understanding that one's spiritual resources provide the ability to rise above everyday experiences

#### **A sense of awe, wonder and creativity inspired by:**

- The natural world, e.g. through Forest School
- Mystery
- Human achievement

#### **A search for meaning and purpose in life by:**

- Developing appropriate responses to the challenging experiences of life such as beauty, suffering and death
- Being concerned by injustice and aggression and their effect on others
- A growing awareness of when it is important to control emotions and feelings and how to use such feelings as a source of growth and human experience

#### **Self-awareness and relationships by:**

- Developing self-respect
- Fostering and appreciation of the individuality of others
- Recognising that every individual has worth
- Building up relationships with others
- Fostering a sense of community

## **5. Moral development**

Recognise right and wrong; understand consequences; investigate moral and ethical issues; offer reasoned views.

Pupils' moral development is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives;
- understanding of the consequences of their actions;
- interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues.

"We expect pupils to understand that while different people may legitimately hold different views as to what is 'right and wrong' all people in England are subject to laws of the land". (DFE, November 2013)

### **Moral Education will be promoted by fostering positive school values:**

- Mutual love and respect, a sensitivity towards others and self-control
- Social, moral and cultural awareness and understanding of the world around them
- Taking personal responsibility for their actions
- Honesty and courage
- Fairness
- Respect for truth and justice
- Caring
- Kindness and tolerance
- Reliability and independence
- Helping those less fortunate or weaker

The Olympic and Paralympic values are also promoted when appropriate, for example on Sports Day or at Break Times – boards with Values on are on permanent display on the top playground.

## **6. Social development**

'Social development refers to pupils' progressive acquisition of the competencies and qualities needed to play a full part in society.' (OFSTED)

Children will be taught to use social skills in different contexts; work well with others; resolve conflicts; understand how communities work.

Pupils' social development is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds ;
- willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively;
- interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.

**Social Education will be promoted by:**

- Grouping of children to give opportunities for paired, small group, large group, class and whole school involvement
- Working alongside adults in a variety of groupings

In these different contexts children will be encouraged to develop:

- A voice (through School Council)
- Co-operation
- Initiative
- Partnership
- Fair competition
- Leadership

**7. Cultural development**

Children will appreciate cultural influences; participate in culture opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity.

'Cultural development refers to pupils' increasing understanding and command of those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills which, taken together, form the basis of identity and cohesion in societies and groups.' (OFSTED)

Pupils' cultural development is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage;
- willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities;
- interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socioeconomic groups in the local, national and global communities.

**Cultural Education will be promoted by:**

- Valuing the children's diverse cultural backgrounds
- Participating in cultural traditions of Horsham and our locality
- Developing children's knowledge and understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society and the world
- Considering our responsibilities as global citizens
- Drawing on people from different cultures and countries to share experiences with the children
- Valuing the contribution to arts and science made by other cultures
- Exposing children to a range of stimuli to allow them to develop new interests
- Extra-curricular activities
- Residential and day trips

## **8. Promoting British values through SMSC**

Through the successful promotion of fundamental British values, at St Mary's CE Primary we expect our pupils to be developing the following understanding and knowledge appropriate to their age:

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety;
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the state and judiciary. They start to understand that some public bodies, such as the police and army can be held to account by Parliament, while others such as the courts maintain independence.
- An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected by law;
- An acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

## **9. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education within the curriculum**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education can be taught through all areas of the curriculum not just PSHE, RE and collective worship. It is an on-going process and valuable links within other subject areas can be made.

It is the responsibility of the whole school community and whole school curriculum, as well as outside of the curriculum. However the contribution of RE, acts of collective worship and other assemblies are central to the school's provision.

## **10. The school's approach to the teaching of the subject**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is embedded in the day-to-day life of our school within the relationships between everyone in our school and the experiences of each individual.

All curriculum areas have a contribution to make to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including promoting British values, and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum.

All curriculum areas should seek to use illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible. This will be reflected in teacher's planning and purchasing decisions.

Christian spirituality and Christian values and principles will be explored in all curriculum areas, especially in RE/Collective Worship, but the integrity and spirituality of pupils from other faith backgrounds will be respected and explored. The diversity of spiritual traditions will be recognised, and pupils will be given access to alternative views.

All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals and showing (Christian) love and respect for pupils and their families.

The school community will be a place where pupils can find acceptance for themselves as unique individuals and where forgiveness and the opportunity to start again is fundamental to the ethos of the school. Pupils will learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others.

Pupils should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

Staff need to be aware that:

- Spirituality is a unique personal characteristic and it depends partly upon human interaction.
- Great care and sensitivity is needed in handling moral issues.
- When looking at certain controversial issues a balanced approach should be taken – personal bias of the teacher should not be the focus.

Teachers should select a variety of teaching styles and methods to maximise the potential learning of each child, which will include:

- regular opportunities for worship, including Christian traditions of worship;
- regular opportunities for personal reflection and times for stillness;
- giving pupils opportunities to share thoughts, ideas and reflections in pairs, groups and as a whole class;
- giving pupils opportunities to reflect on signs and symbols and their importance for different communities;
- offer a variety of whole class, individual and group activities;
- introduce children to a variety of beliefs and cultures, whilst deepening and broadening them for some children;
- use features of their environment to cultivate awe, wonder and mystery;
- offer Circle Time themes that reflect on relationships, achievements, feelings, emotions, responsibilities and experiences of themselves and others;
- encourage visits from a variety of members from the community;
- problem solving and reasoning activities;
- opportunities for other creative approaches e.g. role play and other drama-based activities;
- opportunities to contribute positively to the personal development of others e.g. peer to peer red letter, special person;
- games that enable children to reflect e.g. on behaviour, qualities in relationships, experiences of others;
- using first-hand experience e.g. personal experiences and those of others;
- responding to secondary data e.g. case studies;
- technical stimulus e.g. video, computer -based activities;
- discussions and debates;
- open ended questions;
- reflection on the origins and purposes of life;
- opportunities to make connections between aspects of their learning

## **11. Links with the community**

In order for children to develop a sense and understanding of community, and the need to act as a responsible and respectable citizen links within the wider community are essential for children to gain first-hand experience.

The school demonstrates its commitment to this in the following ways:

- Visitors are welcomed into school and the school continues to develop wider links within the community.
- Links with the Church are fostered through links with all of our local churches and the Diocesan Board of Education.
- The development of a strong home-school link is regarded as very important, enabling parents and teachers to work in an effective partnership to support the pupil.
- Pupils will be taught to appreciate their local environment and to develop a sense of responsibility to it through a range of planned opportunities.
- Planned involvement of other agencies

## **12. Children with Special Educational Needs**

Learning opportunities may be differentiated to meet the needs of particular children. See the school's Learning and Teaching Policy and Inclusion Policy.

## **13. Provision of Equal Opportunities**

As a school we recognise that all people are of equal value and are respected accordingly. All children should have equal opportunities, entitlement and access to the full life of the school. SMSC education is open to everyone regardless of race, gender and ethnic background, and is not confined to the development of religious beliefs.

A parent does have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from areas of Religious Education and acts of Collective Worship (Please see these policies for further guidance on withdrawal from these areas).

## **14. Assessment**

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is monitored informally with their personal and social development.

## **15. Developing and monitoring the curriculum**

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are identified and made explicit within curriculum planning - refer to Diocese Guidance - Educating the Whole Child
- Ensure that the provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is reviewed regularly as part of the school's self-review programme.