



## Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy

September 2024

As Church of England Schools, we seek to develop an ethos whereby the spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs of all within our communities are supported. 'The manner and style of relationships in the school are part of the sign of that response and it is in that that we must never cease to strive always to practice what we preach'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education helps children develop personal qualities, which are valued in a civilized society. For example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, and self-respect. It is taught across the curriculum and throughout school life. It is linked closely to our core values, aims and philosophy.

Opportunities may be provided through an awareness of other relevant policies (Equal Opportunities, SMSC promotion, RE, PSHE/Citizenship).

### **AIMS**

To enable children to develop their personal qualities and become:

- Responsible for themselves, accepting an appropriate measure of responsibility;
- Confident and competent both academically and socially;
- Able to distinguish between right and wrong;
- Able to articulate their own attitudes and values;
- Developing and applying an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school.
- Able to understand and be sensitive to the beliefs, values and ways of life of others, responding appropriately to injustice and prejudice;
- Being reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning.
- Developing an awareness of, and respect towards, diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation, and disability.
- Understanding and appreciating the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.
- Caring, considerate and compassionate;
- Skilled in working collaboratively and independently;
- Responding positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities,
- Able to reflect on their learning and plan for future development;
- Able to respond positively to challenges and problems.
- Gaining a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training.
- Overcoming barriers to their learning.
- developing an appreciation of theatre, music and literature.
- Developing the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic, modern Britain.

All staff, including Support Staff, are involved in spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. These qualities should be evident in the way that children and adults conduct themselves and relationships between them all.

### **SPIRITUAL**

*Beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform children's' perspective on life and their interest in, and respect of, different people's feelings and values. A sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible. Use of imagination and creativity in their learning*

*and willingness to reflect on their experiences.*

St Peter's, St Augustine's, All Saints and Horton St Michael's recognise their duty to promote the spiritual development of its pupils. This is an important part of its work and relates closely to the aims of the academies.

We understand that spiritual development is about "what it is to flourish as a human being". It concerns what human beings are and what they are like and draws heavily on the concept of the "human spirit".

As Church of England Schools we strive to support the pupils in the development of their spiritual life, so that through reflection, pupils will acquire insights and attribute meaning and purpose to personal existence. We believe that this begins with a personal experiential encounter with the living Christ and that once experienced this needs to be fostered and developed through:

- personal and community prayer
- a sense of God's presence permeating the life of the school
- hearing His word spoken in Scripture
- experiencing the community of the faithful
- a curriculum that creates a sense of awe, wonder and of the transcendent
- quiet times of reflection including personal reflection by the prayer stations / collective worship and class time
- opportunities to express personal views and insights whilst searching for the truth together
- a knowledge of oneself - a sense of self-worth,
- valuing one's own abilities, self-respect, recognising one's own shortcomings and limitations;
- emphasises the whole picture of human life - the emotions, creativity in all areas, qualities of character, the world of the imagination;
- a knowledge of the area of values and beliefs - moral, religious, social; encourages reflection and response - to the world, life-experiences, learning;
- encouraging the exploration of ultimate or fundamental questions - why do we live like this? What could our world be like?
- relationships - between staff and children, children's and children's, staff and staff.
- We promote the spiritual development of all children through what is provided in the curriculum and the wider life of the school and the manner in which the curriculum is provided.

For example, children are given opportunities to gain knowledge of, and reflect on, other people's lives, beliefs and values in history, religious education or geography. When working on investigations in mathematics they are encouraged to develop their creativity in solving problems and to experience the joy of success or the disappointment that something did not work out.

The methods and strategies used in teaching promote the spiritual development of the pupils. Teachers use such methods as paired and group discussion to provide opportunities for pupils to share their ideas and test them out on others. They develop curiosity and interest by encouraging children to pose their own questions and spend extended time on a piece of work to encourage perseverance. They develop social skills and relationships by having children engage in extended investigations in a group and give value to the inner life by encouraging the expression of children's feelings.

Teachers create a trusting ethos within the classroom that is conducive to the children's spiritual development. Children are made to feel secure in offering their ideas and sharing their views and beliefs. They are taught to engage in periods of stillness and reflection as they, for example, consider what they have learned or try to put themselves in another's shoes. They are encouraged to take a lively interest in what goes on in their own imaginations and are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder in their learning.

In addition to the planned approach to spiritual development within the schemes of work, teachers make use of situations as they arise to consider questions about life-experiences, beliefs and values. For example, situations arising from the life of the school or the world news provide opportunities for reflection and the expression of emotions and inner feelings.

Collective worship provides the opportunity for spiritual development. By considering areas affecting the communal life of the school, such as how we treat others in the playground, or how we can respond to a charity appeal, the pupils develop an understanding of their identity as part of a community. They begin to gain a sense of the community spirit of the school. Collective worship provides the opportunity to enable children to explore and reflect on beliefs, values, and qualities of character and relationships.

### **MORAL**

*Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and children's' 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.*

At the heart of the Church and the academies' moral teaching lies the understanding that we love because we are first loved by God. We are called to reflect God's love for us in our relationships with others and, since His love is unconditional and freely given, we have been given the freedom to respond to His love, or reflect Him. How we understand and use this gift of freedom is crucial to our moral development - to our becoming fully human. At All Saints, St Peter's, St Augustine's and Horton St Michael's we believe:

- love is at the heart of our understanding of morality
- morality touches all aspects of the curriculum
- every free human action has a negative or positive influence on life
- individuals are created free by God to choose what is right or wrong
- misdemeanors need to be dealt with but the individual must be treated with respect and with an understanding of forgiveness
- pupils should grow in their understanding of what is right and wrong

### **SOCIAL**

*Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with children from different religious, ethnic and socioeconomic 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.*

God did not create mankind for life in isolation, but for the formation of social unity. Therefore, it is part of the responsibility of the school to support pupils, and their families, in the formation of good social attitudes. The school community will nurture our pupils to:

- learn about the obligations, constraints and satisfaction that go with membership of a group and community
- become aware of their own identity as individuals and to take account of the feelings of others
- experience, through the social organisation and management of the classroom, opportunities to learn and develop correct social skills and attitudes
- participate in a supportive way in group and school activities so as to develop co-operative skills that will help all to live with each other
- learn what it means to be a responsible citizen.

### **CULTURAL**

*Understanding and having an 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 development is the increasing understanding and command of those beliefs, values and customs, knowledge and skills which taken together form the basis of identity and cohesion in societies and groups.

Cultures grow and change; features of the past influence and present and will shape its future form. Pupils at All Saints, St Peter's, St Augustine's and Horton St Michael's will:

- be introduced to the values and customs held within our cultural traditions be taught about the values and customs of our national culture
- become aware of cultures of the past through historical programmes of study
- learn about and respect the values, customs and cultural heritage of people who belong to other faiths or ethnic cultures
- have their cultural achievements outside school acknowledged and valued
- be taught through a curriculum which will enrich, deepen and broaden their experience of all cultural excellence whether aesthetic, mathematical literacy, technological, musical or scientific.

Furthermore, we understand that the spiritual is broader than the religious and we recognise that it is not our function to promote any particular form of spirituality, but to enable our children to develop a general understanding, appreciation and response to those areas of life considered to be within the area of "the spiritual".

### **Overall Responsibility**

We are all responsible for all children's spirituality but the overall responsibility for the school's approach to the promotion of the spiritual development of the pupils is the Executive Headteacher and Foundation *Governors*. (Foundation LAC Members)

### **How the curriculum can contribute to SMSC:**

#### **The Contribution of English**

English contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Developing confidence and expertise in language, which is an important aspect of individual and social identity.
- Enabling children to understand and engage with the feelings and values embodied in high quality poetry, fiction, drama, film and television.
- Developing children's' awareness of moral and social issues in fiction, journalism, magazines, radio, television and film.
- Helping children to understand how language changes over time, the influences on spoken and written language and social attitudes to the use of language.

#### **The Contribution of Mathematics**

Mathematics contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Spiritual development: through helping children obtain an insight into the infinite, and through explaining the underlying mathematical principles behind natural forms and patterns.
- Moral development: helping children recognise how logical reasoning can be used to consider the consequences of particular decisions and choices and helping them learn the value of mathematical truth.
- Social development: through helping children's work together productively on complex mathematical tasks and helping them to see that the result is often better than any of them could achieve separately.
- Cultural development: through helping children appreciate that mathematical thought contributes to the development of our culture and is becoming increasingly central to our highly technological future, and through recognising that mathematicians from many cultures have contributed to the development of modern day mathematics.

#### **The Contribution of Science**

Science contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Encouraging children to reflect on the wonder of the natural world.
- Awareness of the ways that Science and Technology can affect society and the environment.
- Consideration of the moral dilemmas that can result in scientific developments.
- Showing respect for differing opinions, on creation for example.
- Co-operation in practical activity.
- Raising awareness that scientific developments are the product of many.

### **The Contribution of Computing**

Computing contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Preparing the children for the challenges of living and learning in a technologically enriched, increasingly interconnected world.
- Making clear the guidelines about the ethical use of the internet.
- Acknowledging advances in technology and appreciation for human achievement.
- Social Media.

### **The Contribution of History**

History contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Looking at the creation and evolution of British society.
- Enabling children to reflect on issues for example slavery and the holocaust.
- Showing an awareness of the moral implications of the actions of historical figures.

### **The Contribution of Geography**

Geography contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Opportunities for reflection on the creation of earth and its' origins, future and diversity.
- Reflection on the fair distribution of the earth's resources and issues surrounding climate change.
- A study of people and physical geography gives our children's the chance to reflect on the social and cultural characteristics of society.

### **The Contribution of Foreign Languages**

Foreign Languages contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Gaining insights into the way of life, cultural traditions, moral and social developments of other people.
- Social skills are developed through group activities and communication exercises.
- Listening skills are improved through oral/aural work.

### **The Contribution of Religious Education**

RE makes a distinctive and substantial contribution to the delivery of SMSC:

- Children's learn about beliefs, values and the concept of spirituality.
- RE reflects on the significance of religious teaching in their own lives.
- Develops respect for the right of others to hold beliefs different from their own.
- Shows an understanding of the influence of religion on society.
- Fosters appreciation and understanding of different cultures, religions and traditions.

### **The Contribution of the Arts**

The arts are an essential part of our curriculum and our children should experience a range of arts both in and out of the classroom. We aim to give our children and young people positive and lasting experiences in: literature; performing arts; visual arts, craft and design; media and multimedia. We are committed to using the arts to enhance the self-esteem and confidence of our children. The greatest disincentives to achievements are low self-esteem and lack of motivation. Creative and cultural programmes are powerful ways of revitalising the sense of community in a school and engaging the whole school with the wider community.

Other examples of how art contributes to our children's' SMSC development are:

- Art lessons develop children's' aesthetic appreciation.
- In turn, Art evokes feelings of 'awe' and 'wonder'.
- Giving children's the chance to reflect on nature, their environment and surroundings.
- Studying artists with a spiritual or religious theme, issues raised by artists, which concerns ethical issues, such as War paintings.

### **The Contribution of Design and Technology**

Design and Technology contribute to children's' SMSC development through:

- Reflecting on products and inventions, the diversity of materials and ways in which design can improve the quality of our lives.
- Awareness of the moral dilemmas created by technological advances.

- How different cultures have contributed to technology.
- Opportunities to work as a team, recognising others strengths, sharing equipment.

### **The Contribution of Music**

Music contributes to our children's' SMSC development through:

- Teaching that encourages children's to be open to the music of other cultures.
- Discussing and reflecting upon a range of personal experiences (own performance) and observed experiences (trips, concerts and peer performances).
- Lead children to appreciate aesthetic order, beauty and on occasion ambiguity, for example through listening activities, where possible beyond their common experience.
- Looking at the way music can change moods and behaviour.
- Offer a range of high quality off-timetable music enrichment activities, for example entertainers, guitars.

### **The Contribution of Physical Education**

Children's SMSC development is actively promoted though PE by:

- Activities involving co-operation, teamwork, competition, rules, self-discipline and fair play.
- Exploring the sports and traditions of a variety of cultures.
- Individual activities that provide the opportunity for self-reflection, awareness and challenge.

### **Beyond the Curriculum**

We deliver SMSC through a variety of ways beyond the curriculum:

- Pupil Leadership e.g. school council, worship team, pupil led worship.
- Play Leaders
- Worship which has a Spiritual, Moral, Social or Cultural theme.
- Supporting community projects
- Our extensive Extra-Curricular Programme
- School productions

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The schools' provision for the promoting the spiritual development of the pupils is monitored and evaluated by the Executive Headteacher, R.E. Coordinator and Foundation Governors (Members) through our Curriculum monitoring and evaluation cycle, feedback from parents informally and formally through the annual questionnaire and through observations and interviews with parents, staff, pupils and visitors.

Signed *Julia Cann* Chair of LAC

Signed *Rebecca Walker* Executive Headteacher