

ST JOHN'S C OF E ACADEMY
Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSCD) Policy

I have come in order that they might have life - life in all its fullness.

John 10:10

Mission Statement:

This policy is carried out within the context and spirit of the school's Mission Statement.

"Guided by God to be the best that we can be."

It supports and reinforces the aims of St John's Church of England Academy, valuing all children equally and as individuals. Our school nurtures the very best in each individual, providing a high standard of learning in order that all children can flourish as a child of God. Our Christian values encourage care for all, mutual respect, responsibility and strong partnerships between school, home and church.

Rationale:

'We believe that the revelation of God's love for all humanity within a holistic approach to education is at the heart of the church's purpose in our Church schools.'

The Way Ahead, Chapter 3 para 3.24

The holistic approach - the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the child - is recognised as fundamentally important for the education of all children by the Governors, staff and parents of our school and consequently, this policy relates to the whole life of the school. It is taught through all subjects of the curriculum and in particular RE and PHSE. It supports all areas of learning and can contribute to the child's motivation to learn. It is recognised that such development will be most successful when the values and attitudes promoted by the staff provide a model of behaviour for the children. In later years, it can enrich the individual's appreciation of life's experiences and their relationships with others.

All schools are expected to carefully plan for the SMSCD of pupils and demonstrate that they are actively promoting fundamental British values: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The quality and impact of this provision being inspected by Ofsted.

St. John's, as a Church of England school, takes a particular perspective which is informed by our Christian foundation. SIAMS (Statutory Inspection Anglican and Methodist Schools) will explore how effective St. John's is in making provision for pupils' SMSCD in every area of its life as a community.

Inspectors will take account of:

- a. the breadth of experiences available to all learners through curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- b. how well the school offers opportunities for learners to reflect on and respond to beliefs, values and profound human experiences from a range of faith perspectives;

- c. the extent to which the opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are characterised by distinctively Christian values;
- d. how well daily collective worship, religious education and other aspects of the curriculum enable learners to make informed choices which are based on Christian values;
- e. the extent to which the school operates as a distinctively Christian community.

(SIAMS Framework, 2012 Christian Character, Section 3)

Definitions, Aims and Provision

Spiritual Development

An Ofsted perspective on Spiritual Development

Pupils' spiritual development is shown by their:

- beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform spiritual development;
- perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values;
- use 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;
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

A Christian perspective on Spiritual Development

All people are spiritual beings with the capacity for relationship with God which is rooted in love.

'God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God and God lives in him.'

(1 John 4:16)

Therefore, spiritual development is relevant to all children, not only those who come from Christian homes.

Pupils' spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. It involves a growing understanding of the need to recognise, not only their own feelings, but also the feelings of others. As their curiosity about their place in the world increases, they try to answer for themselves some of life's fundamental questions which may lead to an understanding and a belief of God. They develop knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes to foster their own inner lives and non-material well being; a search for meaning and purpose where there is a relationship between belief and behaviour; a sense of awe, wonder and mystery about the world and a joy of being alive.

They develop a growing appreciation for the world of imagination and creativity.

For children's spirituality to develop and flourish, there must be trust; trust in a God who

loves them and trust that school is a safe place where their doubts, fears and questions will be listened to.

Aims for Spiritual Development:

In order to foster spiritual development, the school aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- be aware of their own uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God;
- develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of St. John's as a church school and the language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- develop an understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- appreciate what it means to be part of a community and the special nature of human relationships;
- develop the skills and language required to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life;
- develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth;
- develop the ability to reflect on what they have done and how it has changed them.

Objectives for Spiritual Development

- To develop the skill of being physically and mentally still, yet alert and concentrating on the present
- To promote the use of one's imaginative potential to transcend the mundane
- To encourage quiet reflection during a lesson or an act of collective worship
- To find inner confidence and peace
- To develop individual self-confidence in expressing inner thoughts in a variety of ways
- To consider the mystery of God and the wonder of His world

Provision for Spiritual Development

Staff will 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.

Within the Curriculum

- Posing questions in a range of subject areas that encourage children to consider issues of meaning and purpose eg good and bad characters in fiction;
- Showing that it is not always possible to provide an absolute answer and at such times it is a positive experience to value a variety of interpretations eg creation and evolution, the mysteries of the universe in science;

- Fostering high self-esteem by encouraging children to take risks or face challenges in their learning within a secure and positive environment eg investigation and problem solving approaches;
- Demonstrating appreciation for work of the child's imagination and provide opportunities for them to use their creativity and imagination eg art, design and technology;
- Providing opportunities for children to explore the wonder of the natural world and thereby develop and understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected.

Within Worship, RE and PHSE

In Collective Worship, children are given the opportunity to praise God for the wonders of the world, to give thanks for God's limitless love and to learn about and celebrate the shared Christian values which unite them as a school family. There will be time for stillness and reflection which may lead children to the threshold of prayer;

The outstanding RE curriculum will deliver knowledge and understanding about a range of faith perspectives relating to spirituality.

The PHSE curriculum will promote good listening skills through a range of activities such as circle time and foster emotional well-being by encouraging children to express their feelings.

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

The school building and outdoor environment will provide appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer eg in reflection areas, the spiritual garden and interactive prayer stations.

Assessment of Spiritual Development

Are learners becoming aware of:

- God in one's own life and in the life of others
- the distinctive ethos of St. John's as a church school
- the language and symbolism of the Christian faith
- experiences of disappointment, failure and loss and that they may be occasions for spiritual growth

Do children:

- understand of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them
- beginning to acquire a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion;
- have the skills and language required to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life
- develop personal views and insights and a grasp of the intangible

- have the ability to question and explore the meaning of experience, reflect on their own experiences relating to what they have done and how it has changed them
 - apply the insight gained with increasing degrees of perception to one's own life.
- Development is best seen through pupil's relationships and conversations with others but also through planned activities in RE books, PHSE books, displays and presentations.

Moral Development

An Ofsted perspective on Moral Development

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 investigation, and offering views about, moral and ethical issues.

A Christian perspective on Moral Development

'Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.'

Romans 12:9-10

For Christians, morality is not just about good behaviour, it is about shared values that are rooted in Christian beliefs about forgiveness, justice, truth and integrity.

Pupils' moral development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong, fair and unfair and/or moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right; that in order to enjoy 'rights' we also have to accept responsibilities. They are able and willing to reflect on the consequences of their actions and to learn how to forgive themselves and others. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need in order to make responsible moral decisions and to act on them as a point of principle and not out of fear of sanctions.

Aims for Moral Development

To foster moral development, the school aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- Recognise the difference between right and wrong;
- Develop an understanding of how Christian values inform a perspective on moral choices;
- Make moral decisions for themselves and assume moral responsibility through belief and conviction;
- Understand how moral choices can affect the lives of others;
- Understand compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation in the life of school;
- Respect other people without prejudice and treat others as they would like to be treated themselves;
- Begin to engage with big questions concerning morality and ethical issues;
- Show respect for the environment

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 with consideration towards others
- To exercise self-discipline and take responsibility for one's own actions
- To develop positive attitudes and high expectations
- To conform to rules and regulations for the good of all

Provision for Moral Development

All staff are expected to present a model to pupils, in the quality of their behaviour, communication and relationships, towards each other and towards pupil and parents.

Within the Curriculum

- Working together to agree to a Code of Conduct which pupils are encouraged to follow from conviction by choosing the right thing to do rather than because of consequences or sanctions
- Children are encouraged to develop a personal view on ethical questions raised in literature, science and geography
- Developing personal responsibility for learning and setting personal targets

Within Worship, RE and PHSE

Collective worship and assemblies celebrate practical demonstrations of Christian values in the life of the school, local and wider community eg Shining Light Awards. Children are made aware of moral and ethical issues in the national and international context through, for example, representatives from charities being invited into school to talk about their work.

Religious education lessons emphasise the Christian moral perspective whilst also offering models of morality in other faiths eg Judaism and Hinduism.

Children gain skills in conflict resolution through 'Restorative Justice' and problem solving strategies in PHSE.

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

Our Christian values are shared with members of our school community through our website and school documentation as well as through display.

Our behaviour policy makes clear our expectations regarding behaviour, the rewards and sanctions that we operate and that every child is treated fairly and is always offered the opportunity for a fresh start.

Children are expected to accept proper authority and do as they are asked, showing respect to all adults in school. They are encouraged to behave in a polite and respectful

way towards each other and understand the consequences of their actions. Everyone is expected to agree to high expectations relating to caring for the school environment, the local community and global issues upon which they can have an impact eg litter picking, the allotment, reducing waste initiatives etc.

Assessment of Moral Development

Do pupils demonstrate:

- an understanding of the difference between right and wrong?
- an understanding of the moral principles which allow them to tell right from wrong and their links with Christian values?
- moral responsibility through belief and conviction and an understanding of how moral choices can affect the lives of others?
- compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation?
- respect other people, truth, justice, property and the environment?
- an interest and engagement with 'big' questions concerning morality and ethical issues?
- an ability to stand moral ground in the face of peer pressure?

Assessment is primarily through observation of pupil behaviour during structured/unstructured time and when supervised/unsupervised and through the views pupils express. Pupils should move gradually from a 'taught morality' to taking responsibility for their own moral decisions.

Social Development

An Ofsted perspective on Social Development

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.

A Christian perspective on Social Development

Social development is about living successfully in a community. For Christians, community and relationships underpin life. Although some members of our church school may not be part of the local church community, there is an expectation that all relationships will be informed by Christian values.

Social development refers to the development of abilities and qualities that students need to acquire if they are to play a full and active part in society. 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.

Aims for Social Development

To foster social development, the school aims to provide opportunities for children to:

- Build relationships founded on Christian values where they relate positively to others, showing tolerance and respect for differences and sensitivity to the needs, feelings and opinions of others;
- Be equipped to become responsible citizens;
- Feel a sense of pride in their school and their membership of it, participating fully and taking responsibility;
- Gain a clear understanding of the place of the school within the wider Christian community, including local, national and worldwide;
- 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 etc
- To show sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others; to show care and consideration
- To work as part of a group
- To interact positively with others through contacts outside school eg sporting events, visits, church services etc
- To develop an understanding of citizenship and experience being part of a caring community

Provision for Social Development

Within the Curriculum

- Improving co-operation and understanding in relationships, providing opportunities such as group activities where children have constructive and enjoyable interaction with others; it is important that they sometimes work with those children who they would not normally choose as partners;

Within Worship, RE and PHSE

Collective Worship and assemblies will celebrate and reward practical demonstrations of our Christian values such as acts of friendship and generosity.

RE emphasizes relationships, family and community and gives children opportunities to learn about their own and others' faith values.

PHSE sessions will promote opportunities that will enable pupils to develop an understanding of their individual and group identity eg circle time, PHSE etc;

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

We promote opportunities that will allow children to play an active role in service to school (school council, team captains, head boy/girl, monitors, young leaders, learning mentors, buddies) and to the wider community (singing at local care homes etc).

An appropriately trained teaching assistant will provide pastoral support to children or family members facing challenges.

Our school community strives to be fully inclusive (eg by modifying our school building to ensure access for all).

The Senior Leadership Team prioritises support and engagement with networks (eg cluster meetings, school partnerships and attending Headteacher conferences run by the Diocese).

There is active engagement with parents and carers through the 'open door policy' and active support of PTA activities. Mutually supportive links are maintained and developed with our local community helping children to understand the Christian imperative for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged through participation in charity events and acts of service (eg annual Carol Singing);

Mutually supportive links are maintained and developed with the local and national church through regular worship in the parish church, participation in parish events, and church members supporting the school (Experience Journeys, Agape Services, Family Services, Cathedral Leavers' Service, etc.)

Assessment of Social Development

Are children:

- Growing in maturity and self-esteem?
- Demonstrating socially acceptable behaviour?
- Building positive relationships in work and play?
- Equipped to become responsible citizens?
- Proud of their school and participating fully?
- Developing an understanding of the place of the school within the wider Christian community?
- Developing an awareness that we depend on family, school and society?

Cultural Development

An Ofsted perspective on cultural development

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 and showing 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 socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

A Christian perspective on Cultural Development

'After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne.'

Revelation 7: 9a

Cultural development is the capacity, not only to understand and appreciate those elements that have shaped one's own life, but also to be open to people from very different backgrounds. It is the development of knowledge and understanding of differing cultural beliefs, customs and traditions. It is an increasing appreciation of the systems of values and attitudes which form the basis of identity and cohesion within societies and groups.

Aims for Cultural Development

To foster cultural development, the school aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- develop a sense of belonging to, and a sense of pride in, pupils' own culture and appreciation of how it has evolved over time;
- share different cultural experiences including literature, music, dance, art, design, technology and sport to further their own cultural development;
- respond to cultural events celebrating a richness and diversity of cultures as a source of enrichment and appreciation of those cultures represented in the UK;
- develop a knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of Christianity through RE, Collective Worship and events in school;
- understand the relationship between religious belief and culture through a creative, challenging and interactive RE curriculum;
- understand what it means to be part of a community characterised by openness, hospitality and an eagerness to learn from one another.

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

- Exposing children to a wealth of stimuli from their own culture and those of others eg through a wide range of stories and poems, an understanding that mathematics has an historical and cultural base – Greek, Arabic, Egyptian, an awareness of the cultural background of science - ancient Greek scientists;
- a range of art forms will be used to teach children about Christian heritage and tradition, and also the heritages and traditions of other faiths;
- children are given opportunities to take part in and respond to cultural and artistic enterprises (eg workshops with professional artists, poets, authors, dancers, theatre groups etc); children explore current affairs and different interpretations of events by the media;
- visits to the theatre, museums, musical events etc are encouraged;
- children explore the ways in which cultural, racial, and religious prejudice can take root and learn how to recognise this and other forms of discrimination as well as ways to counter it;
- whole school projects which celebrate diversity within the local and wider community feature in our curriculum;

Within Worship, RE and PHSE

- links with our Diocese and dioceses overseas teach children that as a church school, we are a part of the World Wide Anglican Communion which comprises a rich cultural diversity of Christian traditions and practices.

Assessment of Cultural Development

Do children:

- express a positive attitude and pride in their own culture?
- participate in and respond to different cultural experiences?
- express positive attitudes during visits or relating to visitors with links to those cultures represented in the UK?
- understand the cultural diversity of Christianity?

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 in a modern, multi-cultural world.

Provision for SMSC development will also be made through:

The ethos of the school:

We endeavor to provide an environment and ethos, in which children and adults can grow and develop in spirituality and where moral, social and cultural development can flourish; where positive attitudes and consistency provide children with good role models, and similarly, older children are expected to demonstrate good behaviour to

younger children. All children are valued equally, whatever their stage of development, and are entitled to maximum success. The ethos encourages safe, sensible behaviour incorporating good manners, consideration, courtesy and respect for others whilst encouraging imagination, inspiration and reflection.

Positive staff role models support and care for each other and welcome new staff. They foster supportive attitudes and their interest in children encourages children to share concerns with them in a supportive atmosphere.

R.E., Collective Worship and PSHCE:

Daily worship is vital in the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues in our school. St. John's CE Academy holds a collective gathering every day within the Anglican tradition: four days involving acts of specific collective worship and one day when we celebrate the achievements of our school and the individuals within it. Visitors and children are invited to attend and lead our assemblies as appropriate. These may take place in St. John's Church during key events in the church year and include parents and relatives of children at our school. Weekly/fortnightly themes are agreed and this theme is used in planning by the individuals responsible for the particular assembly.

The RE curriculum has been planned by the RE Co-ordinator in accordance with the Diocesan Syllabus. It provides opportunities to explore spiritual and moral questions through religious stories and teachings from Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism in the main, although opportunities to address issues from a wide range of faiths and none are also included in planning. The emphasis is placed on drawing attention to similarities between faith groups and cultures as well as learning about key differences in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect. There are planned opportunities for reflection in every lesson where children can consider the impact of the learning on their own lives and belief systems.

We endeavor to provide a wide range of opportunities for children to engage in PHSE including visits from health care professionals at different points throughout their time at school and involvement in pedestrian training, junior neighbourhood watch programmes and safety carousels.

The Curriculum:

The policy of the school is that all subjects can and should contribute to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils. Teachers must be aware of these responsibilities, know how respective curriculum areas might be used, plan accordingly and be alert to the many every-day, unplanned and incidental opportunities that can provide important starting points.

There are various out of school activities and community links and these reflect the importance St John's Church of England Academy puts on these opportunities to

develop children's interest, talents and abilities whilst supporting and enhancing the whole curriculum but especially SMSC and British Values.

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, we pursue our aims by ensuring that the curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values as documented in all school policies. The curriculum will be delivered using creative and imaginative teaching strategies which allow individual gifts and talents to flourish.

Links with other policies/areas:

Other policies closely linked to SMSC development include:

- British Values
- Collective Worship Policy
- R.E. Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Equal and Diversity Policy
- Personal, social, citizenship and health education Policy

Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the SMSC Policy promotes an ethos based on Christian principles and practice.
- Ensuring that the SMSC Policy is put into practice and is monitored.

The subject lead with the support of the Headteacher has responsibility for:

- Overseeing the planning and provision and reviewing the policy every two years.
- Keep abreast of national developments and act in an advisory capacity, supporting colleagues and organising CPD as appropriate.
- Liaising with the SLT, the Governing Body and the School Council to monitor and evaluate the impact of opportunities.
- Ensuring that SMSC has a high profile in school and is a priority for school development.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This will be achieved by:

- a. auditing curriculum policies and schemes of work to ensure that the school's values including British values are the starting point for curriculum design;
- b. monitoring the quality of teaching and learning;
- c. evaluating impact of SMSCD provision through work scrutiny;

Reviewed: M. Brown/C. Large (June 2016)

