



SAINT JOHN'S

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy

Autumn 2021

Designated Member of Staff	Head Teacher
Committee with responsibility	Vision and Values
Date of Issue	Autumn 2021
Frequency of Review	Annual

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of Changes
1	December 2021	Re-formatting of the policy

For this policy, we have used the Diocese of Gloucester Guidance for Church of England schools in the Diocese of Gloucester as the basis for its contents.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through all the subjects of the curriculum and also through the ethos of the school and through collective worship. As a Church of England School, we identify Christian values which underpin the whole of our community. These values inform our school's vision, aims and ethos, the design of our curriculum, all policies, planning and the school's management and governance.

We have a separate Spirituality Policy which outlines our understanding of spirituality through a person's awareness of self, relationships with others, asking of ultimate questions and appreciation of beauty. These four principles of self, others, ultimate questions and beauty form the basis of spirituality at Saint John's.

Spiritual Development

Pupils' spiritual development is shown by their:

- Ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values
- Sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences.

Aims

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

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child
- Develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of this church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others)
- Develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life
- The ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc
- Develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth
- Understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others.

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues these aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as forgiveness, thankfulness, peace and trust, as documented in all school policies
- Opportunities for spiritual development will be pro-actively planned into the curriculum and actively encouraged in all areas of school life

- Collective worship will celebrate the love of God for every individual and provide opportunities for children to respond to this
- The school building and outdoor environment will provide appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer (e.g. a reflection area in each classroom and areas within the playground which are being developed)
- That children's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight will be fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies
- That children's moral development will be linked to spiritual development through strategies such as the use of Diocesan booklets like the Windows, Mirrors and Doors booklet.
- That the outstanding RE curriculum will deliver knowledge and understanding about a range of perspectives relating to spirituality
- That children will be given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected.

Moral Development

Pupils' moral development is shown by their:

- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives and, in doing so, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Understanding the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, and being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of other on these issues.

Aims

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

- Recognise the difference between right and wrong and begin to understand how Christian values inform a particular perspective on moral choices
- Understand how our moral choices can affect the lives of others
- Be able to work together to agree codes of behaviour that are appropriate for our school community
- Understand the centrality of forgiveness and reconciliation in the life and culture of our school
- Begin to engage with big questions concerning morality and ethical issues in the wider community and in the world, and to realise that each of us has a responsibility to work for justice.

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues these aims by ensuring that:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life are explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as justice, service, perseverance, courage and truthfulness, as documented in all school policies
- Opportunities for moral development will be pro-actively planned into the curriculum and actively encouraged in all areas of school life

- Our Christian values are shared with members of our school community through our website and school documentation as well as through colourful images, posters, classroom displays, screen savers and exhibitions around the school building
- Collective worship and assemblies celebrate practical demonstrations of Christian values lived out in the life of the school, local, and wider community (e.g. House point Cups, Mrs King Award (the Values Cup), Mrs Gilbert Progress Cup, Headteacher awards and weekly certificates for good effort. Our behaviour policy makes clear that every child is treated fairly and is always offered the opportunity for a fresh start
- Parents and carers are made aware, through our website and other documentation, of our school's expectations regarding behaviour, as well as the rewards and sanctions that we operate
- Children gain skills in conflict resolution through PSHE lessons
- Children are made aware of moral and ethical issues in the national and international context through, for example, representatives from charities and being invited into school to talk about their work
- The Worship Committee is fully involved, alongside teachers, senior leaders and governors in reviewing the impact of our Christian values on the behaviour, culture and ethos of our school.

Social Development

Pupils' social development is shown by their:

- Use 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 communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- Acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

Aims

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

- Build relationships founded upon the Christian values (e.g. love, trust, forgiveness and perseverance)
- Gain a clear understanding of the place of the church school within the wider Christian community including local, national and worldwide
- Access pastoral support from school staff, local clergy and parish team members
- Be equipped to become responsible citizens who recognise the importance of service and working for the 'common good'; (e.g. each class plans some form of social action each year)
- Feel a sense of genuine pride in the school and their membership of it.

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, we pursue these aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as friendship, and compassion, as documented in all school policies

- Opportunities for social development will be explicitly planned into the curriculum and in all areas of school life
- Collective worship and assemblies will celebrate and reward practical demonstrations of our Christian values such as, service to the community, and acts of friendship and generosity, particularly shown towards children facing difficulties or challenges (e.g. through Mrs King Values Cup)
- Strong mutually supportive links will be maintained and developed with the local and national church and the worldwide Anglican communion through regular worship in the parish church, participation in parish events, and church members supporting the school through volunteering
- Our Inclusion Lead will provide pastoral support to children or family members facing challenges
- Our school community strives to be fully inclusive (e.g. by welcoming **all** families from all backgrounds). The School Council is trained and supported to play an active part with staff and governors in monitoring and evaluating the social cohesiveness of the school community
- Senior Leaders prioritise support and engagement with networks (e.g. 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 PTFA activities.

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 and that of others
- Understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of preparation for life in modern Britain
- Knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- Participation in elections for school council representatives
- Willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting 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.

Aims

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

- Gain a knowledge and understanding of the values from their own culture, heritage, traditions and an appreciation of how they have evolved and developed over time
- Develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the cultures of those with whom they interact day by day, as well as other cultures represented in the UK
- Develop a knowledge of the local Christian heritage, particularly through visits to local churches and the Cathedral, and to explore their relationship to it

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of Christianity through links overseas, RE, collective worship and events in school
- Understand the relationship between religious belief and culture through a creative, challenging and interactive RE curriculum
- Explore what it means to be a child
- Understand what it means to be part of a community characterised by openness, hospitality and an eagerness to learn from one another

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, we pursue our aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as friendship and creativity, 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
- 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 (e.g. Prayer Day and our school Tree of Life and community arts initiatives, as well as workshops with professional artists, filmmakers, poets, authors, dancers, etc)
- Children explore current affairs and different interpretations of events by the media, such as presented by Picture News
- 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.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Opportunities offered to children for SMSC Development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- Monitoring of teaching and learning by Head Teacher/Curriculum Leads
- Audit of policies, planning and schemes of work
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings
- Sharing of classroom work and practice
- Conversations with children (including formal pupil voice discussions)
- Evidence from pupils' work.