



Forest Academy  
&  
Elveden Church of England  
Primary Academy

Spiritual, Moral Social and  
Cultural Policy

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## **Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Elveden Church of England Primary Academy promotes a Christian ethos and, by example and direct teaching, follows and promotes the teachings of Jesus, whilst recognising that not all of its members will be practising Christians.

Forest Academy promotes a broadly Christian ethos which reflects the beliefs of the majority of our children and families whilst recognising that not all of its members will be practising Christians.

We recognise that the personal development of children's, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve.

We therefore aim to provide an education that provides children 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 other cultures.

This is a whole school issue.

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

The integrity and spirituality of children from other faith backgrounds will be respected and explored. The diversity of spiritual traditions will be recognised, and children 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 respect for children and their families.

The school community will be a place where children 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.

Children should 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.

Children 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 children's work and achievements.

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.

## **General Aims**

- To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of our values and principles.
- To ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of SMSC issues through the curriculum and the general life of the school.
- To ensure that a child's education is set within a context that is meaningful and appropriate to their age, aptitude and background.
- To ensure that children know what is expected of them and why.
- To give each child a range of opportunities to reflect upon and discuss their beliefs, feelings and responses to personal experience.
- To enable children to develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- To enable children to begin to develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment and an appreciation of the many cultures that now enrich our society.
- To give each child the opportunity to explore social and moral issues, and develop a sense of social and moral responsibility.

## **Spiritual Development**

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable children to:

- Recognise the challenge of Jesus' teaching.
- Experience moments of stillness and reflection.
- Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences.
- Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.
- Recognise and reflect on Christian approaches to Spiritual Development.
- an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs
- a respect for themselves and for others
- a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion
- an ability to show courage and persistence in defence of their aims, values, principles and beliefs
- a readiness to challenge all that would constrain the human spirit: for example, poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, force, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination
- an appreciation of the intangible - for example, beauty, truth, love, goodness, order - as well as for mystery, paradox and ambiguity
- a respect for insight as well as for knowledge and reason an expressive and/or creative impulse
- an ability to think in terms of the 'whole' - for example, concepts such as harmony, interdependence, scale, perspective
- an understanding of feelings and emotions, and their likely impact, and an ability to talk about feelings Schools that are encouraging pupils' spiritual development are, therefore, likely to be giving pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they affect peoples' lives

- where pupils already have religious beliefs, supporting and developing these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them.

Spiritual education also involves:

<b>Awareness-sensing</b>  <i>Being aware of your own awareness</i>	<b>Here and Now</b> –being aware of the immediate experience  <b>Tuning</b> – the awareness during heightened aesthetic experience (e.g music) also profound sensitivity or empathy, feeling at one with others, belonging  <b>Flow</b> – feeling of concentrated attention, so engrossed you lose track of time.  <b>Focusing</b> – the awareness of all of you including your bodily awareness
<b>Mystery-sensing</b>  <i>Being aware that parts of our lives are in principle incomprehensible</i>	<b>Wonder and awe</b> – the distinction between the commonplace and the profound  <b>Imagination</b> – letting go of reality. Being open and willing to go deeper.
<b>Value – sensing</b>  <i>What we feel is a measure of what we value</i>	<b>Delight and Despair</b> – experienced as emotion  <b>Ultimate goodness</b> – a delight with trusting in the order of the world  <b>Meaning</b> – endless curiosity and meaning making, seeking a sense of identity: Who am I? Where do I belong? What is my purpose? To whom am I connected?

Hay, D. and Nye, R. (1998) *The Spirit of the Child*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

## Moral development

Moral development involves many different elements. Children should be able to:

- Develop a sense of justice and fairness so moral behaviour becomes an instinctive habit
- distinguish between right and wrong and the will to apply this to their own lives
- recognise legal boundaries and develop a respect for the law
- understand consequences of behaviour
- give reasoned views about moral and ethical issues
- understand and appreciate the viewpoint of others
- experience opportunities to empathise, develop their own conscience and think altruistically

## **Social Development**

Social development is concerned with a child's ability to recognise that individuals are interdependent. It involves learning the values, knowledge and skills that enable children to relate to others and to contribute in positive ways to a range of settings including family, school and the community. This kind of learning is passed on to children directly by those who care for and teach them, as well as indirectly through social relationships within the family or with friends, and through children's participation in the culture around them. Through their relationships with others and their growing awareness of social values and expectations, children build a sense of who they are and of the social roles available to them. As children develop socially, they both respond to the influences around them and play an active part in shaping their relationships.

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*Children want and need to make sense of who people are, what they do, and why they do it – Edwards (1986:3)*

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As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable children to:

- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- Learn about service in the school and wider community.
- Begin to understand the Christian imperative for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged.

## **Cultural Development**

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable children to:

- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence individuals and society.
- Recognise Christianity as a world faith.
- Develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment.
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions.

## **Teaching and Organisation**

Development in SMSC will take place across all curriculum areas, within activities that encourage children to recognise the spiritual dimension of their learning, reflect on the significance of what they are learning, and to recognise any challenges that there may be to their own attitude and lifestyle.

All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

Class discussions and circle time will give children opportunities to:

- Talk about personal experiences and feelings.
- Express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs.

- Speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying, death etc.
- Share thoughts and feelings with other people.
- Explore relationships with friends/family/others.
- Consider others' needs and behaviour.
- Show empathy.
- Develop self-esteem and a respect for others.
- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Develop the skills and attitudes that enable children to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally — e.g. empathy, respect, open mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness

Many curriculum areas provide opportunities to:

- Listen and talk to each other.
- Learn an awareness of treating all as equals.
- Agree and disagree.
- Take turns and share equipment.
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively.

In addition to this, half termly throughout the school year, the children will celebrate a day celebrating each aspect of SMSC. The children will spend the whole day participating in activities centred on the theme of the day. The day will be documented in a scrap book, which will be kept in the front office for parents to peruse at will.

### **Links with the wider community**

Visitors are welcomed into school.

Links with the Church are fostered through links with the 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 child.

Children will be taught to appreciate their local environment and to develop a sense of responsibility to it.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Provision for SMSC is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

This is achieved by:

- Subject Leaders identify aspects within their subjects to be included in teacher planning. Coordinators monitor teacher plans and their evaluations and assessments.
- Subject Leaders monitor resource provision, identifying shortfalls.
- The Headteachers have oversight of this policy and monitor the provision of SMSC.