

St Michael's CE VC Primary School

Let Your Light Shine

Guidelines for Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development (SMSC) December 2019

Our school vision is: Let Your Light Shine.

At St Michael's School we provide a safe, happy and inspiring learning environment based around our core values of love, joy, hope and forgiveness. We celebrate the uniqueness of every child, and encourage them to shine in all they do, preparing them for life's journey.

As a local community school St Michael's aims to be inclusive, and welcomes all children from the neighbourhood, whatever their family faith, if their parents wish an education centred on Christian values. The development of children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural awareness and understanding plays a crucial role in the development of the whole child.

Spiritual Development

Intent

'For a human being, especially a child or young person, to have a full quality of life, spirituality in all its aspects must be nurtured and affirmed' (John Bradford).

What is spirituality?

Spirituality concerns a person's relationship with themselves, with others, with God (or the transcendent), and with nature and the environment. These four elements: self; others; transcendence and beauty form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality.

It is also vital that all of the adults in school also see the need to develop their own spirituality for their own wellbeing, and so that they can effectively support and help our children and each other.

The four elements - what these consist of:

Self

- Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity

Others

- Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

Transcendence (Beyond)

- Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (eg about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world

Beauty

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature

How we aim to develop a strong sense of spirituality: implementation

1. Have regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in assembly, going for a walk
2. Provide many opportunities for creativity and using the imagination
3. Valuing play opportunities
4. Singing often, especially with others.
5. Ensuring regular time for prayer. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful, saying sorry. Allow children the opportunity to open themselves to God.
6. Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings. We use elements of the SEAL structure to support this across the school.
7. Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental. This is the foundation of our behaviour management approach.
8. Provide opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world
9. Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important healing and redemptive process.
10. Encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways. (eg: how we treat each other every day; charitable works; looking after pets)
11. Explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE programme
12. Read often to children, and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts, in particular the Bible

Structures to support and develop spirituality:

- Opportunities are planned across our curriculum.
- Our RE books are used regularly as a focal point for reflection, and include both RE and PSHE
- We have a planned programme for Collective Worship across the school. This maps out themes across the year, based on our school values and 'Values for Life'
- There is a daily act of collective worship taking different forms, and involving children
- Displays and pictures around the school continually celebrate and encourage reflection and spirituality
- Our RE curriculum is inspiring and motivating
- Visits and visitors support all our work

Impact: how do we know this is being effective?

Spiritually developed children love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them; they are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings, they have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, they possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills.

Moral Development

The moral development of pupils is shown by their:

- *ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, and apply this understanding in their own lives*
- *understanding of 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 others on these issues.*

It is vital that children develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Our moral approach is centred on teaching values of justice, fairness, honesty and understanding. These values are rooted in our Christian foundation, but they are also ones which have a universal foundation. Specific areas of development include the following:

- All classes follow a clear, school-wide system of rewards and sanctions. Behaviour is very good: there are very few exclusions or use of higher sanctions.

- There is a relentless whole-school focus on kindness and our four core values. This ensures that children's behaviour towards each other maintains a very high profile.
- All classes set their own rules within the context of the overall school rules.
- Children contribute strongly to school life through the school council. This meets every fortnight, and debates topics such as: school dinners; how to improve the playground; what to do in wet play; bullying & behaviour. 2 members are elected at the start of the year, and take turns representing their class
- We strongly encourage children to take active roles in the running of the school, including: distributing registers & fruit; assembly monitors; jobs around the school and in class. Through this they learn about taking and sharing responsibility for their environment.
- Y6 children help younger children at lunchtimes
- The Collective Worship themes include a strong strand of moral education. Children are regularly involved in delivering Collective Worship.
- Children are regularly involved in fundraising activities to demonstrate their commitment to helping others. This includes numerous events during the year, including: Harvest; Poppy Appeal; Christmas Shoeboxes; Red Nose Day; Children in Need; Sport Relief
- We are a 'Fairtrade School' which places emphasis on how we can take practical steps to help others.
- Opportunities are explored through the curriculum for investigating moral and ethical issues – eg deforestation/different religious beliefs/why there are poor in the world.
- Opportunities within the curriculum to explore concepts of law and democracy (eg in the Topics 'Ancient Greece' and 'Crime and Punishment in the 19th Century').

Social Development: embedding British values

The social development of pupils is characterised 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;*
- *Their 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;*
- *Their 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;*
- *Their development of the skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in, and contribute positively to, life in modern Britain.*

More than any other aspect, children's social development is implicit in almost everything we do.

Specific aspects include:

- Regular discussion activities, partner work and group work
- Regular mixing of seating arrangements in class
- Opportunities to work with children from other classes across the school (in theme weeks)
- Regular opportunities to share aspects of children's home life and background
- Children are taught how to work well with each other, how to resolve conflict, and how to work together to create a harmonious school environment. A recent example is our 'Counts to be kind' whole-school focus.

Our Collective worship programme provides many opportunities to develop social responsibility, and draws specifically on examples from the life of Jesus. This programme is based on the 'Values for Life' framework – we also incorporate most of the themes from the national 'SEAL' (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) framework. We stress above all the importance of love for one's neighbour: kindness, respect and understanding. For further details refer to the school's PSHE policy.

Cultural Development

This is demonstrated by pupils':

- *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 their 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*
- *Willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities*
- *Interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity*

We are passionate about providing children with a rich and varied curriculum that provides many opportunities for developing cultural expression and understanding. An important aspect of our curriculum are whole-school theme days and weeks. These provide many varied opportunities for children to engage in music, dance, drama, art and sport. Other aspects include:

- Regular visits and school trips, which help give a 'Wow' factor to topics. This includes visits to theatres; museums; archaeological sites; places of worship
- Regular visitors to the school, including people representing different faiths, disabilities
- Regular theatre visits and musical visits to the school
- An annual whole-school production. In recent years this has included the Lion King and Beauty and the Beast.
- Active participation by children in music festivals and concerts in Bristol and South Glos.
- Music in the school which focuses on different aspects of singing, including modern song, folk song, songs from different cultures as well as a variety of musical genres
- Opportunities to learn a whole range of musical instruments, as well as participate in a choir, orchestra and flute ensemble
- Resources and displays in and around the school that reflect a multi-ethnic society, and the contribution of many different ethnic groupings to modern Britain.
- Good use made of children within the school to promote cultural development, through the celebration of festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.
- A huge range of sporting opportunities within and beyond the curriculum, with a large number of clubs available to pupils from Y1 to Y6

Impact, monitoring and evaluation

These guidelines are applicable to all teaching and teaching support staff.

Subject leaders are responsible for monitoring the development of SMSC through their ongoing monitoring. There are specific aspects which are a part of the RE curriculum, or part of the Collective Worship cycle. There is a PSHE coordinator who is responsible for this aspect.

Key Stage Leaders have particular responsibility for monitoring/developing aspects of social and moral development.

The Headteacher and Deputy Head share the overall responsibility for ensuring that all of these aspects are high profile and both explicit and implicit in all we do.

Review

These guidelines will be reviewed at four-yearly intervals.

Reviewed: December 2019

Next review: December 2023