

# Christ Church CoE Primary School

## School Policy Document



### Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Education: SMSC POLICY

<b>Date reviewed</b>	May 2024
Date Approved by Full Governing Body	Summer 2024
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	Summer 2027



## Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural (SMSC) Policy

***This policy was formulated to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.***

The Governing Body recognises its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. This policy will ensure equality and fairness regardless of race, sex (gender), sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, disability or age.

*Learning & Growing Together in FAITH, HOPE & LOVE.*

### The Christ Church approach to SMSC

The SMSC curriculum is extremely important at Christ Church CoE Primary School. Governors, school leaders and staff acknowledge the value of SMSC education in preparing our pupils for a fulfilling adult life in a modern, multi-cultural society.

This policy:

- has been written by the Headteacher and has been adopted by the Governing Body
- is consistent with the overall vision and aims of the school and is fundamental to our shared ethos
- takes account of key Church of England and Diocese, including the Evaluation Schedule for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for RE

### Introduction

Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is regarded as a key responsibility for all schools. In Church of England schools, SMSC is widely regarded as an area of vital importance, and good quality provision in this area is seen as a key hallmark of a distinctively Christian school. In the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, promoting SMSC is also seen as part of the Diocesan Vision of *'Growing disciples – Wider, Younger, Deeper'*.

The Religious Education curriculum and worship in a Church School should be where this distinctiveness is reflected most clearly. At Christ Church CoE Primary School, SMSC development can also be traced throughout the curriculum and should be evident in the wider ethos of the school.

**Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development at Christ Church is distinctive because of the Christian faith and beliefs that underpin the school ethos and curriculum.**

## **CHRIST CHURCH CoE PRIMARY SCHOOL STATEMENT for SMSC:**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the child is recognised by Governors and staff as being of fundamental importance for the education of all children. SMSC is taught through all subjects of the curriculum and is integral to the ethos of our school. It supports all areas of learning and can contribute to a child's motivation to learn. It is recognised that development in these areas will be most successful when the values and attitudes promoted by the staff provide a model of behaviour for the children. It can enrich an individual's appreciation of life's experiences and their relationships with others.

### **Our aims for the positive and effective promotion of SMSC:**

- ❖ To develop a feeling of self-worth and contentment, whilst considering the feelings and needs of others.
- ❖ To develop positive moral attitudes, enabling children to make informed, responsible choices about their behaviour and actions in and out of school.
- ❖ To be a fully inclusive school - accepting, supporting and nurturing each other.
- ❖ To work co-operatively and sensitively within the school and within the wider local and global community.
- ❖ To encourage curiosity through enrichment of the curriculum.
- ❖ To develop an understanding and celebration of a wide range of cultures, faiths and differences.

### **Ofsted**

The current Ofsted framework includes a clear focus on the importance of SMSC development. This is included in the *Behaviour & Attitudes* and *Personal Development* sections of the framework, which signify an emphasis on the personal and emotional aspects of learning of all pupils. Under the Personal Development criteria, Ofsted will evaluate the intention of the school to provide for the personal development of all its pupils, and the quality with which the work is implemented.

### **SIAMS Inspection Framework**

The SIAMS Evaluation Schedule for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools does not include SMSC as a distinct area to be explored with a school. Rather, it explores these areas in the three strands focusing on character development:

*Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy*  
*Community and Living Well Together*  
*Dignity and Respect.*

Spiritual development is more explicitly explored in strand 2 – *Wisdom, knowledge and Skills*.

SIAMS Inspectors will assess how the school is enabling pupils, and adults, to flourish. Through exploring aspects such as 'Courageous Advocacy' within a school, inspectors will be assessing how far pupils develop awareness of the part they can play now and going forward in being active citizens in the world.

## SPIRITUALITY & SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*“If the spiritual is properly addressed, the moral, social and cultural will fall into place more easily” (Alan Brown, 1997)*

### What is spirituality?

The concept of spirituality is notoriously difficult to define. Historically, many have believed it to be inextricably linked to religion; but at Christ Church CoE Primary School, we believe that spirituality is not just faith based and can be found in every aspect of our school lives.

According to Sally Burns and Georgeanne Lamont, the spiritual **transcends the ordinary and encompasses an awareness of the meaning and purpose of life:**

*Spirituality is a source of creativity open to us all. It brings that quality of aliveness which sparks inquiry, ideas, observations, insights, empathy, artistic expression, earnest endeavour and playfulness. It opens us to life and to each other.*

*Spirituality is a thread which runs through our life, bringing hope, compassion, thankfulness, courage, peace and a sense of purpose and meaning to everyday, while reaching beyond the immediate world of the visible and tangible. It drives us to seek and stay true to values not ruled by material success.*

**Spirituality can therefore be defined as ‘RELATIONAL AWARENESS’:  
awareness of my relationship with myself, with others, with the world and beyond.**

**MYSELF** - being a unique person and understanding self-perception

**OTHERS** – how empathy, concern, compassion and other values and principles affect relationships

**THE WORLD** – relating to the physical and creative world through responses to nature and art

**‘BEYOND’** – relating to the transcendental; understanding experiences outside the ‘everyday’

### SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

There is an expectation that Church of England schools will ensure the spiritual development of all children. The *Vision for Education* sets out that, in addition to embracing an agenda of excellence and academic rigour, a wider framework is required where all children flourish.

‘*Life in all its fullness*’ means giving emphasis to physical and intellectual development, while also meeting the needs for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** relates to fundamental questions about the **meaning and purpose of life** which affect everyone; it is not dependant on a person’s religious beliefs or affiliation. It has to do with the universal search for **individual and communal identity**, and with our **responses to challenging experiences** such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It is to do with the search for **ways to answer** these existential questions and for **values** by which to live.

At Christ Church CoE Primary School, Spiritual Development is a whole-school responsibility.

We believe that there are opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners in every aspect of school life. In particular, there are three core areas that can contribute to the spiritual development of pupils: the general ethos of the school, Collective Worship and the curriculum (including RE).

### **What do we mean by 'development' in spiritual development?**

Spirituality is an innate human capacity. Spiritual development is not about becoming more spiritual (in a measurable or expansive sense). It is about realising or becoming more and more aware of one's natural, innate spirituality.

This is sometimes a slow and gradual process, at other times there might be significant stages of realisation, which are part of the ongoing 'developing' process. Unlike the development of a photograph, people don't reach a finished state of spiritual development, but participate in the ongoing process of spiritual realisation.

### **Mindfulness & Spiritual Development**

The last decade has witnessed a remarkable rise in the use of mindfulness techniques in many areas of society, including schools. The teaching of mindfulness skills has the potential to significantly enhance the spiritual development of young people.

According to Katherine Weare, the practice of mindfulness enables young people to live in the moment and to respond skilfully to whatever is happening in the now. She contrasts this to the state of *mindlessness*, where the respondent moves through life rarely noticing what is happening around them, '*ruminating on the past or worrying about the future*'. It is suggested that the benefits of mindfulness are in the areas of psychological health and well-being.

In '*Spiritual Development: interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom*' (NCEO 2019), spiritual development includes ensuring that children have experience of:

- Self-awareness and empathising with the experiences of others (Conn 13v14-15)
- Being guided by individual beliefs and values and being willing to take a stand to defend them (Hebrews 12 v3)
- Learning how to love self, believe in your own potential to achieve and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges (Joshua 1 v9)
- Exercising imagination and creativity, appreciating beauty in the world and being alive to experiences of awe and wonder (Psalm 8 v 3-4)
- Being intrigued by mystery and being open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life (Ecclesiastes 11v5)
- Being comfortable with stillness and silence and being open to engage in reflection, meditation or prayer (Psalm 46 v10)
- Being ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, forgiving self and others (Colossians 3 v13)
- Being willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success (1Samuel 17 v 37)
- Demonstrating curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions (John 1 v A6—A7)
- Appreciating and being thankful for what is good in life and show generosity to others (1Thessalonians 5 v18)

### At Christ Church, we promote **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** by:

- offering children a wide variety of stimuli and experiences
- enabling a sense of awe and wonder
- using drama to stimulate discussion
- encouraging the children to reflect on their faith & beliefs (e.g. in Worship)
- using art and music to stimulate imagination and creativity
- asking higher-order questions
- encouraging the children to verbalise their inner voice
- developing a sense of what is important in life
- enabling as many opportunities within our curriculum for reflection, questioning, debate and emotional responses
- teaching the children to value others opinions
- fostering high esteem by encouraging the children to take risks or face challenges in their learning with resilience
- giving the children many opportunities for paired work and group work to encourage co-operation, listening and discussion

## MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Pupils' moral development involves pupils acquiring:

- an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict
- a concern for others and the will to do what is right
- an ability and willingness to reflect on the consequences of their actions and learn how to forgive themselves and others
- the knowledge, skills and understanding, qualities and attitudes they need in order to make responsible moral decisions and act on them
- the ability to understand the viewpoints of others

The important challenge is to develop in pupils a deep, abiding commitment to moral values. The issue is not cultivating moral literacy; it is **cultivating moral identity**. It is about making these values integral, so that doing what's right becomes a reflex and so pupils are strongly motivated to do what's right, even when it conflicts with other needs and wants.

Moral development at Christ Church CoE Primary School provides pupils with opportunities to explore issues from a wide range of viewpoints. Underpinning the investigation, discussion, reflection and evaluation are the teachings of the bible, offering pupils a solid foundation on which to build their lives.

Opportunities for moral development may be encountered in these ways:

- developing a sense of right and wrong based on Christian teaching
- aligning behaviour and attitudes in light of Christian teaching
- being able to recognize expectations
- considering the values we live by and the ways in which they are based on the Bible
- considering the individuals rights and responsibilities which will include justice and fairness for themselves and others
- Considering the ways in which they can be change makers in the world now through challenging injustice

**At Christ Church we promote MORAL DEVELOPMENT by:**

- The implementation of an agreed behaviour policy across school
- Teaching about right & wrong choices through our PSHE / RSHE curriculum
- Enabling the children to make decisions
- Using stories to unpick moral messages
- Empowering children to be good role models and to value good behaviour
- Developing the children's self-esteem and self-confidence to deal with any issues that may arise
- Celebrating achievements
- Enabling the children to understand about rights and responsibilities

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Pupils' social development involves acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global), and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good.

At Christ Church CoE Primary School, pupils learn what it means to live well together. They display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to make an active contribution to the democratic process in each of their communities.

This includes:

- understanding and valuing self and others
- being aware of own and others' emotions and feelings, and how to respond to different emotions
- building relationships between different communities
- understanding and acceptance of difference (whether that be related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion etc)
- talking to, listening with and co-operating with others
- consideration of own and others' rights, responsibilities and aspirations
- appreciation of appropriate behaviours and social conventions

**At Christ Church, we promote SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT by:**

- Planning a wide range of topics and opportunities for the children to work together
- Teaching social skills through our PSHE / RSHE curriculum
- Encouraging teamwork through PE and games
- Developing a cohesive school community for all stakeholders
- Developing an effective School Council
- Encouraging a variety of responsibilities within school
- Teaching the children to resolve conflicts effectively
- Encouraging the children to take part in events in the local community
- Developing an understanding of the similarities and difference between people

## CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Pupils' cultural development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and an ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of cultural experiences. Through this, pupil will acquire a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' ways of doing things and curiosity about differences. They will develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to understand, appreciate and contribute to culture.

Cultural development at Christ Church CoE Primary School provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide multi-cultural faith and appreciation of the diversity of beliefs and cultures across the local community, the nation and the world.

Cultural Development includes:

- learning about others, accepting and valuing other traditions and celebrations
- learning to treat all with dignity and respect, as people created in the image of God
- developing an awareness of their own culture and changes within it
- exploring the diversity of cultures within Britain
- understanding the contexts in which people express their beliefs and identity
- developing an openness to other beliefs and cultural differences
- promoting an understanding of Christianity from a global perspective - which may include encounters with people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures
- being part of a link with a school in another part of the world
- recognising that there are things we share in common across cultural, ethnic, religious and socio-economic communities

**At Christ Church we promote CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT by:**

- Valuing and celebrating other faiths and cultures that are represented in our school community
- Developing an acceptance of similarities and differences, particularly through PSHE and RE teaching
- Celebrating a range of festivals throughout the year
- Encouraging meaningful discussion with the children
- Using a wealth of stimuli and resources with the children from their own and others' cultures

## OPPORTUNITIES for SMSC

Our pro-active approach to SMSC development is evident across the life and work of the school. This includes both planned and un-planned opportunities.

Planned opportunities include: our School vision / aims / ethos, Collective Worship, Behaviour Policy, Equal Opportunity & Inclusion Policy, RE Curriculum, PSHE/RSHE Curriculum, the wider curriculum, opportunities for extra-curricular opportunities and links to the church / local community.

*This policy will be reviewed and updated every three years*