

## **The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Children**

### **at St Mary's Primary School**

#### **Rationale**

The 'Children's Act' (2004) based on the Green paper "*Every Child Matters*" (2003) which outlines five key provisions for young people.

Be healthy

Stay safe

Enjoy and achieve

Make a positive contribution

Achieve economic well-being

Article 14, "Children have the right to think and believe what they want, and to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights."

In its SMSC policy and practice the school promotes the underlying principles of the act to ensure that students are provided with a safe learning environment in which to develop their understanding of the world in which they live. The SMSC policy aims to prepare students by providing opportunities for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Across the whole school SMSC education will be found integrated into the curriculum, assemblies and the daily life of the whole school community.

In addition St Mary's aims to promote fundamental British values through;

- enabling students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- encouraging students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely
- enabling students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation for and respect for their own and other cultures
- encouraging respect for other people, and
- Encouraging respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

## 1. Spiritual Development

This can best be described by the extent to which children display:

- A system of personal beliefs, which may include religious beliefs.
- An ability to communicate their beliefs in discussion and through their behaviour.
- a willingness to reflect on experience and to search for meaning in that experience
- a sense of awe and wonder as they become conscious of deeper meanings in the apparently familiar features of the natural world or in their own experience
- Reflection in assemblies.
- developing moral understanding and sensitivity affirming schools' core values through SEAL themes and Values for Life
- Developing social and cultural understanding and promoting equality including respect for and understanding values and practises which distinguish their own and others religious traditions –SEAL lessons/RE lessons/Collective Worship.
- Practising attitudes and skills of worship (e.g. gratitude, thoughtfulness, wonder, reverence, attentiveness, regret, forgiveness, compassion, responsibility, finding help and support).
- Celebrating our highest common values with respect to human rights and capacities, the quality of our relationships and our sense of responsibility for each other and the environment: rights respecting schools, SEAL.
- seeking to add significance and meaning to daily lives of pupils by acknowledging the reality of a divine being in the experience of believers
- 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.

Spiritual development is an important element of a child's education and fundamental to other areas of learning. It is not religious development, although many aspects of a child's spiritual awareness can be both developed and expressed through the Daily Act of Worship.

Some of the ways in which Spiritual Development is nurtured at St Mary's School are:

- Educational visits, to expose pupils to a range of experiences, which may promote a sense of awe and wonder
- Achievement certificates, stickers and awards to develop the pupils' self-esteem
- Assemblies, church services, reflective displays in central areas based on 'Prayer Spaces for Schools'.

- Pupils are encouraged to work as advocates for less able pupils and with supervision to support younger pupils (Peer Mediation, Anti-bullying Ambassadors).
- The PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) program, Rainbow Seal, which develops self-esteem and knowledge, calming spaces in school.
- Elected Student Council for pupils to advocate their views and concerns, representation on the Bridport Youth Council.
- Visiting musicians, artists and science specialists who provide interactive workshops
- Displays of pupils' work
- Reflective Diaries giving pupils a weekly opportunity for personal spiritual reflection.
- Lighting the Candle in year 5 & 6 which challenges young people to think about the Collective Worship they experience in school and to play an active and thoughtful part in it.
- Supervised and filtered access to the Internet

## 2. Moral Development

This can best be described by the extent to which children display:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, readily apply this understanding in their own lives and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- 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 issue
- respect for persons, truth and property
- a concern for how their actions may affect others

In April 1993 the National Curriculum Council in a discussion paper suggested that a school's values re moral development should include:

- telling the truth
- honouring commitments
- respecting the rights and property of others
- acting considerately towards others
- helping those less fortunate and weaker than ourselves
- taking personal responsibility for one's actions
- self discipline

In addition, school values should reject:

- bullying, cheating, deceit, cruelty, irresponsibility and dishonesty

Some of the ways in which Moral Development is promoted at St Mary's School are:

- SEAL lessons, circle times, Rights and Responsibilities work
- Anti-bullying Council and Anti-bullying week.
- Clear models of good behaviour developed by the pupils to encourage children to understand choice and consequences.
- Games involving turn taking

- Drama and role-play and story telling
- Group work and discussions
- Assembly themes
- Fund raising activities for others
- Incidents, which occur in school which, may give an opportunity for teaching about morality and behaviour.
- School Council work on new School Beliefs
- ELSA's and I Can Problem Solve work

### 3. Social Development

This can best be described by the extent to which children display:

- The quality of relationships in school between pupils and adults and between pupils and their peers.
- an ability to exercise a degree of responsibility and initiative
- an ability to work successfully in groups and to participate cooperatively and productively in the school community
- A growing understanding of society through the family, the school and the local and wider (national and international) communities, leading to an understanding of the structures and processes of society. Respond to the opportunities being offered to show initiative and to take some responsibility for their own learning
- To become co-operative and productive members of the community beyond school
- 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 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.

Much of this area is incorporated within the school's Behaviour Policy, including the use of Anti-bullying Ambassadors, Peer Mediators and is carried out through cross curricular themes, notably Citizenship.

Examples of opportunities for this at St Mary's include:

SEAL lessons, golden time, circle time, playtimes, school council, Peer Mediation, Family SEAL, joint activity days with other schools and Eco- schools.

### 4. Cultural Development

This can best be described by the extent to which the children show increasing understanding and command of others' beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills. This development is likely to take place through the curriculum and through participation in a range of cultural activities matched to children's needs.

The overriding aim of the school is to educate and encourage children to work together in a caring environment by providing a range of opportunities for each individual to develop to the maximum of his or her potential in physical, intellectual, personal, social and moral terms. This can best be described by the extent to which children display:

- 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 as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Some of the ways in which we promote cultural development at S Mary's School are:

- Educational visits
- Religious Education
- Collective Worship
- Topic work (Linked learning)
- Half termly whole school global learning days
- Experiences of other cultures
- The overall ethos of the school
- Visiting artists, musicians, and people from other cultures
- Visits to the libraries and museums
- Access to the Internet (Supervised)

Role of the Co-ordinator

- To undertake occasional audits of school displays to ensure there are opportunities to learn about other countries/cultures and that they do not reinforce stereotypes
- To organise spiritual or interactive, multicultural events in liaison, and with the support of the R.E. co-ordinator,
- To organize/support teachers in planning class or whole school events, as above.

## **Procedures and implementation**

To ensure all students make a positive contribution to society students at St Mary's are provided with:

- Quality teaching and learning to aid the development of skills and knowledge required to become responsible citizens
- Opportunities to develop a supportive, caring and respectful attitude towards all members of the school community.
- Opportunities to prepare for life in the wider community

## **Monitoring**

The school monitors the success of spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision in the following ways:

- regular policy review by Learning and Teaching Committee of Governing Body, accompanied by monitoring report from relevant member of Leadership Team;
- regular review of School Self-Evaluation Form, which requires the School to use evidence of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in evaluating the 'Personal Development and Well-Being' of students;
- routine and regular monitoring and evaluation of participation in out of hours activities
- Monitoring of lessons in accordance with school monitoring policy
- Interviews with a representative sample of students. (e.g. School Council)