



## **DUNMOW ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EDUCATION POLICY**

#### **Rationale**

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

#### **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 pupil's education is set within a context that is meaningful and appropriate to their age, aptitude and background.
- To ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and why.
- To give each pupil a range of opportunities to reflect upon and discuss their beliefs, feelings and responses to personal experience.
- To enable pupils to develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- To enable pupils 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 pupil the opportunity to explore social and moral issues, and develop a sense of social and moral responsibility.

#### **Ethos**

In this Church of England School the ethos is founded on Christian values and beliefs and in particular on the unique capacity and worth of each person as both an individual and as part of the community. The values and attitudes promoted by the staff influence the behaviour and attitudes within the school. The quality of relationships and the atmosphere within the school reflect an appreciation of its shared values.

#### **Spiritual Development**

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

- Sustain their self esteem in their learning experience
- Develop their capacity for critical and independent thought
- Foster their emotional life and express their feelings
- Experience moments of stillness and reflection
- Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences
- Form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
- Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life

- Recognise and reflect on Christian approaches to Spiritual Development
- Embrace diversity as a gift of creation

Spiritual development needs to be viewed as something fundamental to the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical sense or expressed through everyday language. It has to do with relationships, with God for those who believe, and with other people. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity and with our responses to challenging experiences, the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live.

**In developing the spirituality of children we help them to become aware of:**

- The human search for meaning and purpose of life which may lead to an understanding and belief of God
- The joy of being alive
- The beauty of the natural world
- The mystery and wonder of existence
- The world of imagination and creativity
- The value of the non-material dimension of life
- The need to understand and value oneself and one's feelings
- The need to understand the impact of our decisions on others.
- The need to recognise the feelings and achievements of others

**In this way, spiritual development encourages**

- Self-awareness
- Reflection
- Reasoning
- A sense of enduring identity
- Good relationships
- Cooperation and empathy
- The formation of long term ideals
- Responsibility

**The school will promote spiritual development through:**

- Collective Worship- Dunmow St Mary's is a Church of England School and as such the promotion and the understanding of Christianity and its values underpin Collective Worship.
- Fostering high self-esteem by encouraging children to challenge themselves in lessons with the mild, medium and spicy levels of differentiation. Also by promoting the growth mind set ideals and helping children to understand that not being able to do something means they are about to learn.
- Appreciating and creating opportunities for them to use their own creativity and imagination through an engaging, experiential thematic approach to the curriculum.
- Offering opportunities for aesthetic experience through the creative curriculum.
- Making time for stillness and reflection which may lead to children coming to the threshold of prayer.
- Posing questions that encourage children to consider issues of meaning and purpose.
- Developing good listening skills in the children and helping them to understand that adults will listen to them also.
- Showing that it is not always possible to provide an absolute answer and at such times it is a positive experience to value a variety of interpretations and responses.

- Improving co-operation and understanding in relationships, providing opportunities such as group activities where children have constructive and enjoyable interaction with others; it is important that they sometimes work with those children who they would not normally choose as partners.
- Fostering emotional well-being by encouraging children to express their feelings and yet to have the ability to control their emotional behaviour.
- Developing the capacity for evaluative reasoning and critical thought by encouraging children to look beyond the surface.

### **Moral development**

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

- Recognise the unique value of each individual.
- Recognise the dignity of difference in others
- Recognise the challenge of Jesus' teaching and seek to apply to their own lives.
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others.
- Gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes.
- Take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others.
- Distinguish between right and wrong.
- Show respect for nature and the environment.
- Make informed and independent judgments.

This relates to the child's developing understanding of what accepted as "right", "wrong" and "fair" in society.

The School will try to build on the moral values within the home while accepting that there might be different approaches between home and school.

### **Moral development is concerned with:**

- Developing the child's awareness and understanding of the moral code of the communities in which they live.
- Helping the child to realise that to enjoy rights we have to accept responsibilities.
- Developing the child's understanding of why rules are necessary.
- Developing the child's self-discipline so that rules are observed as a point of principle and not out of the fear of sanctions and also by helping them to understand that they are working for their own gain, not to please others.
- Giving the child the knowledge and ability to question and to reason so that they are capable of deciding on the most appropriate action after considering its consequences.
- Develop the skills necessary to explain their own behaviour.
- Value physical well-being, privacy, feelings, beliefs and rights of others.

### **The School will promote the moral development of the child by:**

- Ensuring everyone demonstrates respect at all times.
- Having a consensus of values that are stated clearly and owned by everyone
- Building up the self-esteem of the child.
- Encouraging everyone within the school to behave in an acceptable way towards one another.
- Helping children to understand the consequences of their actions.

It is important that there is a consistency in the approach to this amongst the staff.

## **Social Development**

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

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

## **Cultural Development**

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

- Recognise the enduring 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.
- Develop an understanding that cultures are dynamic and are constantly being re-shaped.

## **The School will promote cultural development through:**

- Exposing children to a wealth of stimuli from a variety of cultures. This will be taught through the whole curriculum. Visits out of school and visitors to the school will support this teaching.
- Encouraging tolerance and appreciation of the beliefs, values and customs of different cultures

## **Teaching and Organisation**

Development in SMSC will take place across all curriculum areas, within activities that encourage pupils 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 will give pupils opportunities to:

- Talk about personal experiences and feelings.
- Express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs.
- Speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying, death
- 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.
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Mentoring:

When circumstances in a child's life cause anxiety or stress this can affect their self-esteem and ability to cope with life in and out of school. We have a trained mentor team who provide support and strategies to help children in such circumstances.

Social skills groups also help children develop interpersonal skills.

## **Links with the wider community**

Visitors are welcomed into school.

Links with the Church are fostered through links with St Mary's church and the Diocesan Board of Education.

The development of a strong home-school link is regarded as very important, enabling parents and staff to work in an effective partnership to support the pupil.

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

**Agreed by Governors Dec 2014**

**Reviewed May 2017**

**Date of Next Review May 2018**