

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development Policy

Adopted by school:	St Peter's Alvescot
Date:	Oct 25



Our vision

We welcome everyone, as part of the St Peter's family, to experience the fullness of God's love in their lives. We aim for everyone to be nurtured in order that they can reach their full potential and so flourish, achieve and live fulfilled lives.

Our vision drives and supports the ethos of our school and the policies and practices within it. We believe that SMSC is the golden thread that runs through our school. We attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and well-being of all within our school community. SMSC development is supported through Collective worship, the curriculum, the enrichment, the school environment and how we interact with ourselves, others, the world and God/divine being through stillness, creativity, curiosity and big questions.

We are committed to:

- A curriculum that engages, excites is meaningful and rigorous
- stimulates questioning and challenge is aspirational, creative, flexible and responsive
- prioritises spiritual, moral, social, cultural intellectual and physical development
- educates citizens for today and beyond We recognise the importance of the academic, personal development and well-being of every child in our school.

This includes recognising the importance of providing a range of opportunities for our pupils to respond to, that supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with an understanding and an overview of teaching the Equality Act (2010) and including global education themes.

Legal requirements:

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which: (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

To fulfil their legal obligations under section 48 of the 2005 Education Act, SIAMS inspections make judgments on SMSC education in Church of England and Methodist schools.

The SIAMS Framework (2024) references spirituality implicitly and explicitly. The Church of England Vision for Education has a core desire for 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) which requires educating the whole person, in line with our school vision.

The OFSTED framework 2024 states that provision for pupil's spiritual includes developing their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life
- knowledge of, 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

Evidence may be gathered by Ofsted inspectors from anywhere relevant to ensure that schools are promoting SMSC, mental and physical development of pupils at the schools; and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. They current rates our school as outstanding for personal development (2025)

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) (NB whilst each dimension is outlined separately there is a great deal of overlap between the four areas).

Spiritual development

Our working definition of 'spirituality'

As a pupil, staff and governor team, we have reflected on various discussions about Spirituality. Here are some of the key messages we considered.

Spiritual development is the development of an awareness that there is "something more to life than meets the eye, something more than the material, something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to." (Terence Copley)

Spirituality is delighting in all things, being absorbed into the present moment, not too attached to self, and eager to explore boundaries of 'beyond' and 'other', searching for meaning, discovering purpose, open to more. (Rebecca Nye)

Spirituality is an awareness of mystery and its value to human flourishing.

"Spirituality was generally viewed as enriching individuals in their understanding of and ability to relate to, others and of society as a whole". Education for Adult Life (SCAA 1996)

"The term spiritual and moral development needs to be seen as applying something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and /or expressed through everyday language. It has to do with relationships to other people and for believers, with God. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity – 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 meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live." SCAA discussion paper

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. If spirituality were something which developed or grew in a quantifiable sense, then surely adults would be more spiritual than children. Many would argue that children seem to be far more spiritually aware than adults. Perhaps as a part of growing older, the pressures of life can distract or distort our interests so that as adults, our spiritual awareness is dulled and we do not 'realise it' to the full.

We then agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

'A way of connecting, to yourself, to others or to the wider world, including God if you so choose. It can be a moment or a process which adds value to human flourishing and fulfillment.'

We are committed to:

- Giving opportunities 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
- Providing a 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.

We support pupils in their spiritual development by:

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as planned moments and as they arise
- providing 'reflection spaces' in classrooms, public spaces, outside, and by using the church building, and through the 'Prayer Spaces in School' website
- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership such as leading CW and taking on pupil council leadership roles.

Moral development

Moral development is about knowing what is right and wrong and acting on it accordingly. Moral development is about personal and societal values, understanding the reasons for them and airing and understanding disagreements. This is embedded throughout the school community.

We are committed to:

- Being truthful and honest
- Respecting rights and property of others, their opinions and customs, even when they are different from our own
- Helping others
- Solving differences of opinion in non-violent ways using the principles of restorative practice.

We support pupils in their moral development by:

- Providing a clear moral code (behaviour motto) based on the Christian values of sacrificial love; repentance; forgiveness and truthfulness
- space and time for thinking and reflection as an essential part of school life for all - (spacemakers, CW, Jigsasw PSHCE)
- collective worship which is rooted in Christian values and regarded as vital to the life of the school
- a culture rich in praise and thanksgiving (Celebration CW, values cards, newsletters)
- a setting where relationships and interactions are modelled on Christian values (relational schools, zones of regulation)
- space for different perspectives and belief systems to be heard and where empathy is encouraged, (see Equality and Diversity policy and SDP 2025)
- opportunities for opening up the big questions concerning morality and ethical issues throughout the curriculum (Big questions board, CW, RE and PSHCE curriculum)
- communications which are open and truthful at all levels and where integrity is important
- role models who are fair, respect everyone and keep promises (relational schools, zones of regulation)
- visual displays of your Christian values through images; posters; classroom displays; events exhibitions, many of which are created by the pupils. (Prayer week, Art Gallery, Earth day etc)

Social development

Social development shows pupils working together effectively, relating well to adults and participating in the local community. It also includes the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

We are committed to:

- Fostering the skill and qualities of team building through the development of self-confidence, co-operation, sensitivity to others, reliability, initiative and understanding
- Providing an environment where pupils can take responsibility for themselves and others in school and the wider society
- Teaching the Equalities Act throughout our curriculum.

We support pupils in their social development by:

- a clear understanding of the place of the church school within the wider Christian community - locally, nationally and globally, e.g. Diocesan links
- a relationship between the school and the parish which is positive and exemplifies Christian attitudes and values
- a place where relationships between all members of the community can be nurtured
- pastoral support by the incumbent as well as by members of the school staff
- an ethos where rights and responsibilities are balanced carefully
- a sense of community and inclusion rooted in Christian values which are articulated clearly by all stakeholders

- existing partnerships with the community, other schools and churches as well as fostering new links
- acts of service towards others within and beyond the school
- a centre for learning where everyone can flourish, regardless of their background

Cultural development

Cultural development shows pupils understanding and feeling comfortable in a variety of cultures and experiencing a range of cultural activities (art, theatre, travel, concerts). Children develop the fundamental British Value of exploring, understanding and tolerance regarding the diversity of cultural traditions and beliefs of others.

We are committed to:

- Promoting an appreciation of our own cultural tradition/s and encouraging an appreciation of other peoples' cultural traditions
- Celebrating the richness of culture and tradition.
- Weaving global education themes through our curriculum.

We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our school, our society and the world by:

- opportunities for pupils to explore their Christian cultural heritage - particularly through visits to local churches and the cathedral - and their place within this heritage
- displays around the school showing examples of the range of different cultural influences on the Christian tradition, including artwork produced by pupils
- explorations of the cultural diversity of Christianity through RE, collective worship and events in the school
- practical ways to address any issues of prejudice and discrimination – circles, awareness days, visitors, texts, CW
- the nurture of gifts and talents of all, promoting participation in extra-curricular activities – see enrichment overview, courageous advocacy, celebration CW,
- authentic and real representations of cultures throughout the curriculum – see curr overview, equality and diversity policy
- hospitality, openness and a willingness to learn from one another, including 'welcoming the stranger' (community lunches, litter picks, school council projects)
- opportunities for all in the community to recognise what it feels like to be an outsider and to acknowledge that everyone feels outside at some stage in their life (CW, visitors, parables)
- an environment where openness and respect shine through every interaction within and beyond the school community

Teaching and Learning of SMSC at St Peter's

In the light of this we will ensure that the SMSC development of our pupils is promoted across the curriculum and in the wider life of the school by:

- Recognising the importance of our collective worship programme in supporting and encouraging SMSC development, including teaching the Equalities Act 2010 and aspects of global education.
- Planning and provision for introducing and teaching aspects of SMSC through Collective Worship using a range of resources, for example the "Jigsaw" programme, Diocese of Guildford CW resources, Assemblies.org and BBC.
 - Providing a detailed long term plan covering all aspects of SMSC and detailing the curriculum intent for these and related areas, particularly Relationships, Health and Sex education. This plan is under constant review so that we can take into account our rapidly changing world and learning opportunities which arise under this heading
- Providing an appropriate range of effective teaching and learning resources and strategies as above that enable pupils to reflect on and respond to the issues of SMSC importance and concern
- Encouraging teachers to plan for and respond to opportunities to develop SMSC development and to ensure curriculum leaders have evidence of provision for SMSC education in their subject maintain a positive climate in school in which all are valued and respected and expected to make a positive contribution

- Reviewing the effectiveness and impact of our policy and practice as part of our cycle of school improvement.

Promoting British Values

St Peter's is very much committed to serving our community and recognises the multicultural, multi faith and ever-changing nature of our world in which we live. We also understand the vital role we have in ensuring that groups or individuals within the school, are not subjected to intimidation or radicalisation by those wishing to unduly, or illegally, influence them. St Peter's School also follows equal opportunities guidance which guarantees that there will be no discrimination against any individual or group, regardless of faith, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, political or financial status, or similar. Our staff are dedicated in preparing students for their adult life beyond the formal examined curriculum, and ensuring that we promote and reinforce British Values to all our students. We strive to promote and secure British values throughout our curriculum and ethos. This statement demonstrates our commitment not only to promoting British Values, but also celebrating and embracing them.

The DfE have recently reinforced the need to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British Values of:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs

Role of Headteacher

Ensures that SMSC and British Values is taught throughout the curriculum and underpinned by our Christian vision and values and is accessible to all pupils - Establishes, monitors and evaluates effective SMSC and British Values across school. - Ensures that there are reliable and researched based approaches to assessing, tracking and monitoring pupils' knowledge and skills and learning. - Holds ambitious and high expectations for all staff and pupils in teaching and learning the SMSC and British Values curriculum.

Role of Governors

- The Governing Body will ensure that all pupils are offered a rich and engaging SMSC and British Values curriculum that meets all needs. They will ensure it provides knowledge, skills and personal development for pupils to achieve well and live happy and fulfilled lives.
- The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring the way the curriculum is implemented.
- The Governing Body will review curriculum development via the curriculum leader's reports, reports from subject leaders, link governors monitoring reports, pupil voice, parental engagement and the Headteacher's reports.

Role of Staff

- The teachers and other adults who work with the children are pivotal in ensuring that all pupils access and broad and well balance curriculum and ensures that through this curriculum, each pupil achieves to their potential.
- Ensure pupils are inquisitive and challenged
- Assess and monitor pupil knowledge and skills Monitoring Processes This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Head teacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. Extra support and guidance In addition to the policy measures outlined in this document, a range of other support mechanisms are in place and information on these is shared with all leaders, managers, Governors, staff, volunteers, and other adults covered by this policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Senior leaders, governors and children will support pupils and adults to share their experiences and opportunities for spiritual development through *eg discussions, focused days, spiritual journals, reflection spaces*. This will impact on the opportunities and experiences that are available to children and adults across the school community enabling all to flourish.

Other related policies:

Collective Worship

Teaching and Learning

Behaviour for LEarning

Anti bullying

RSE

PSHCE and RSE

Staff wellbeing

All subject specific curriculum policies