Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy

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Meole Brace C of E Primary School and Nursery

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1. Introduction

The school provides a 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. This is the requirement of Section 78 Education Act 2002.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) are closely interconnected as they relate to matters of self, others, beauty and beyond. We affirm, in line with the National Society, that 'If the spiritual is properly and fully addressed, the moral, social and cultural will fall into place more easily'.

We recognise that progress in all areas of SMSC depends on developing these spiritual areas within pupils:

- Spiritual Capacities: recognition that all human beings are capable of spiritual growth through capacities such as self-awareness, reflection, empathy, imagination and creativity.
- Spiritual Experiences: ways in which pupils can encounter the spiritual dimension of life
- Spiritual Understanding: the need to make sense of the spiritual experiences encountered
- Spiritual responses: how this experience and understanding impacts and shapes the way in which we live our lives.

2. Aims

At school the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development lies at the heart of the curriculum, and is promoted through all the subjects of the curriculum, through the character of the school and its collective worship within a framework of positive attitudes and Christian values. We seek to offer an education, which is based on the belief that each individual is unique and valuable.

Our Mission Motto and Statement of aims was compiled when the school amalgamated in 2009, following a long period of consultation with pupils, staff, parents, carers and governors. The Head teacher, Governing Body and staff ensure that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural are affirmed in the Mission Motto*: **Belonging, believing, becoming**

and the Statement of the school:-

Our school aims to reflect a warm, caring Christian ethos where everyone is valued.
Our school aims to:
- *Offer an excellent education within a framework of Christian values and beliefs*
- *Be an inclusive community in which everyone feels happy, valued and secure*
- *Build strong relationships with our families, church and wider community*
- *Promote an environment where children of all abilities can reach their full potential*
- *Foster a desire for independent and life-long learning.*

To achieve these aims, the following areas of experience are fostered in pupils:

- **Beliefs:** developing understanding of how commitment to belief and the Christian faith contributes to personal identity
- **A sense of awe and wonder**: continuing openness to and appreciation of the natural world around us and the achievements of mankind.
- **Feelings of transcendence:** recognising that some experiences point beyond the everyday towards God.
- **Search for meaning and purpose**: readiness to reflect on "difficult" questions and respond to the challenging experiences of life, including an awareness of the response offered by religious faith.
- **Self-knowledge:** growing self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-respect which recognises the importance and power of the physical, emotional, rational and spiritual aspects of personality.
- **Creativity:** willingness to express inner feelings through creative arts, recognising the importance of imagination, intuition and inspiration as a sharing with God's Spirit in the greater creative process.
- **Feelings and Emotions:** growing awareness of the importance of emotions, which can appreciate beauty or respond to injustice, and which when rooted in love, lead to a real human maturity.
- **Relationships:** growing recognition and valuing of the worth of every individual, developing sense of community and ability to build up relationships, as Jesus said "Love your neighbour as yourself".
- **Sense of right and wrong:** growing recognition that rules govern behaviour, dictating that some actions are classed as right and some as wrong. "Love God and love your neighbour as yourself".
- **Self-discipline:** developing awareness that moral behaviour comes as much from regulation from within as conforming to outside rules.
- **Making responsible decisions:** readiness to engage in open discussion to learn about moral issues so that there is regular involvement in the process of decision making.
- **Respect for persons, truth and property:** growing understanding that people hold different beliefs and objects dear to themselves, and a growing appreciation of and respect for diversity.
- **Repentance and forgiveness:** recognition that people sometimes make mistakes, so that asking for or offering forgiveness is a necessary step towards restoring broken relationships.
- **The will to behave morally:** developing understanding that behaviour affects other people and it is necessary to make a deliberate choice to behave in a way which will be of benefit to others.
- **Knowledge of codes and conventions of conduct:** recognition that societies lay down rules which reflect what is of value in the community and that these are used as guides for behaviour.

3. Spiritual Development

Spirituality is a search for meaning and purpose in life through an awareness of inner feelings, beliefs and experiences. It relates to dimensions of life not necessarily experienced through physical senses, but to do with feelings, emotions, attitudes and beliefs. The term spiritual need not be synonymous with religious.

The school's spiritual boundaries are determined by its Church status. Nothing which dishonours its Anglican Foundation will be considered appropriate for inclusion within the spiritual curriculum.

The spiritual dimension of life in the school is expressed by encouraging children to respond to ultimate questions and values, primarily in relation to the Christian faith. There are also opportunities to learn from other beliefs and philosophies. Pupils' individual spiritual development is fostered throughout the curriculum, in particular Religious Education, with Collective Worship providing a daily context to explore spiritual experience from within the Christian faith in particular.

The spiritual dimension links particularly to the areas of Collective Worship and Religious Education and the content of the relevant school policies.

Spirituality is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses or through everyday language. It can be encouraged through many areas such as creativity, relationships, emotions, self-knowledge, meaning and purpose, transcendence, awe, mystery and wonder and beliefs.

3.1 Spiritual aims

- To provide an approach to teaching which embodies clear Christian values and enables pupils to gain understanding through reflection on their own and other people's lives and beliefs.
- To explore beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values.
- To create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible.
- To create an environment that encourages use of imagination and creativity within learning.
- To provide opportunities to foster the spiritual development of each pupil, regardless of age, ability, gender or cultural background.
- To foster a reverential attitude to the Divine and affirm the value of belief.
- To foster reflection, meditation and stillness.
- To recognise the existence of others as independent from themselves.
- To question and explore the meaning, purpose and direction in life.
- To develop an environment where all members of the school community are encouraged to be self-aware and attentive, not rushing around all the time.
- To deliver a curriculum where pupils ask big questions and teachers are confident to facilitate this.
- To develop a sense of belonging through relationships and with the wider school community and Diocesan family.

Ways in which the school promotes spiritual development will include:

- the school's climate, ethos, values, behaviour, attitudes and beliefs;
- promoting explicit Christian values clearly linked with Jesus' teaching and the Bible;
- the overall approach and response to the well-being of the whole school community;
- experiencing pride in being a member of the school community;
- affirming each pupils' spiritual journey;
- opportunities in the curriculum where a spiritual vocabulary is developed;

- strong sense of celebration showing the school is vibrant and 'alive';
- creating a climate where pupils and staff understand their own self-worth and are willing to take risks and learn from failure;
- showing love and respect for all individuals and their families;
- reflective physical space where pupils and staff can stop, reflect and recharge;
- creating an environment which values wholeness and affirmation and values all contributions;
- fostering and showing fairness in all situations;
- generating fun, happiness, curiosity - a zest for life and discovery;
- being kind and considerate - compassionate, understanding recognising and responding to hurt, grief and pain;
- strengthening interpersonal relationships between staff, other adults and pupils - offering welcome, listening, support and advice;
- develop personal views, insights and commitments and apply insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to their own lives;
- time for reflection and prayer throughout the day;
- emphasising the importance of friendships;
- participating in collaborative group work;
- reflect on their experiences with increasing sensitivity;
- opportunities to explore their feelings and emotions within a planned, safe and secure environment;
- nurture of gifts and talents of all, promoting participation in extra -curricular activities
- recognising and responding to joy, new life and the miracles of the world;
- appreciation of arts, literature, music, drama, dance, crafts and design and technology
- appreciation of the beauty of the environment, man-made structures/buildings, scientific wonders
- an exciting, challenging, altering, learning environment that reflects beauty, care, interest, nature and dedication.
- encourage empathy with events in history and religious education
- participate in local events and festivals especially those in church.

In Collective Worship and Religious Education by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- reflect on the lives and actions of significant people whose lives exemplify qualities which are universally valued
- reflect upon aspects of human life and the natural world which raise questions of ultimate meaning and purpose
- consider the beliefs of Christian and other religions
- give opportunities to discover the person and teaching of Jesus Christ
- to explore the Trinity – God known through Father, Son and Holy Spirit - and realise that, for Christians, a relationship with Him is possible
- consider and respect the viewpoints of other people.
- collective worship which is highly valued, with time for silent reflection embedded
- opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship
- opportunities to reflect and act on what has been learnt within worship
- create an appropriate atmosphere during collective worship both in church and in school
- allow music to play an important part during worship.
- allow pupils to experience the celebration of the Eucharist

4. Moral Development

Moral development concerns the ability to make judgements about behaviour and actions. It refers to knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes in relation to what is right or wrong. Pupils explore, understand and recognise Christian values, knowing that they are underpinned by Biblical teaching.

Moral education allows pupils to reflect on the impact of their actions on themselves and others, and develops the ability to stand by decisions in the face of criticism, ridicule or opposition. This can build self-confidence and determination. At times this will involve acknowledging and challenging diversity, as well as shared values, as stances derived from different religious and non-religious worldviews are considered.

The Behaviour Policy and Anti-bullying Policy promote self-discipline, good manners and politeness and as such contribute to pupils' moral development. The school's relationship and sexual policy also links closely with this area.

4.1 Moral aims

- To foster Christian moral values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice.
- To enable pupils to talk about their own attitudes and take responsibility for their own actions.
- To set guide-lines to govern personal behaviour, based on explicit Christian values.
- To teach the principles which distinguish right from wrong.
- To allow individuals to understand the long and short-term consequences of their actions for themselves and others.
- To develop the ability to apply insights to significant social, moral and political issues affecting individuals and communities.

Ways in which the school promotes moral development:

- recognise the difference between right and wrong and readiness to apply this in their own lives;
- understanding of the consequences of their actions;
- interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues
- clear moral code 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;
- Collective Worship which is rooted in Christian values and regarded as vital to school;
- pupils begin to explore the influence of family, friends, and the media on moral choices;
- Collective Worship and the curriculum that provides pupils with opportunities to discuss and reflect on the moral aspects of spontaneous or topical issues;
- work with parents, governors and all staff to ensure expectations of pupils' behaviour;
- staff committed to high quality pastoral care of pupils who treat all pupils equally and promote the school's Christian values;
- a culture rich in praise and thanksgiving;
- a setting where relationships and interactions are modelled on Christian values;
- space for different perspectives and belief systems to be heard and where empathy is encouraged;

- visual displays of your Christian values;
- opportunities for opening up the big questions concerning morality and ethical issues throughout the 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;
- recognise that their values and attitudes may have to change over time.

4.2 Values/actions we wish to promote

- Faith
- Telling the truth
- Keeping promises
- Respect of life
- Honesty
- Treating people equally regardless of gender/race/culture
- Respecting the rights and property of others
- Being considerate towards others
- Helping the less fortunate and needy
- Unselfishness
- Taking personal responsibility for one's actions
- Learning to accept the consequences following wrong actions
- Carrying out a task to the best of one's abilities
- Conscientiousness
- Loyalty

4.3 Values/actions we wish to discourage

- Bullying
- Cheating
- Dishonesty & deceit
- Selfishness
- Boasting
- Destruction of life or property
- Exploitation of others
- Peer pressure to induce wrongful actions/behaviour
- Cruelty
- Irresponsibility
- Greed and envy
- Inconsiderate behaviour

5. Social Development

Social development refers to the abilities and qualities that pupils need to play a full and active part in society. It also relates to the growth of knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects.

Social development covers the development of the inter-personal skills necessary for successful relationships.   Social development gives learners an understanding of their roles as members of an interactive and complex society and the ability to build and maintain sound

relationships and develop a sense of responsibility. It enables learners to make a difference in their local and wider communities.

The quality of relationships is crucial in forming pupils' attitudes to good social behaviour and self-discipline as exemplified in the school's Behaviour Policy. There are clear links between social development and the school's equal opportunities policy.

5.1 Social aims

- To provide pupils with opportunities to develop a range of social skills in different contexts, including interaction with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.
- To allow pupils to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively.
- To encourage pupils to relate positively to others, take responsibility, participate fully in the community, and develop an understanding of citizenship.
- To explore the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.
- To enable pupils to take responsibility and initiative in many areas of school and community life.
- To develop pupils' understanding the importance of core values and social ideals, including democracy, human rights, the rule of law, social justice, political and legal equality, tolerance, and a commitment to dialogue and understanding.
- To value diversity and equality in society, including age, disability, ethnicity, religious or non-religious beliefs, sexual orientation and other characteristics.
- To encounter challenging and unfamiliar contexts, such as residential and community based work, work-related learning and working with professionals and experts.

Ways in which the school promotes social development:

- opportunities to explore the variety of relationships within the school community and ways in which members can contribute to its well-being;
- opportunities for pupils to take increasing responsibility for social duties;
- opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs or groups;
- encourage pupils to be independent in their learning;
- opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in competition and fair play;
- understanding of the place of the church school within the wider Christian community - locally, nationally and globally;
- relationship between school and parish which positively exemplifies Christian attitudes and values;
- pastoral support by the Church Team as well as by members of the school staff;
- sense of community and inclusion rooted in Christian values articulated clearly by all stakeholders;
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities;
- developing an awareness of environmental issues and the importance of climate change;
- reflecting on the role and value of leadership, participation and volunteering;
- providing opportunities for pupils to participate fully in the community;
- encouraging social rights and responsibilities through the provision of and involvement in groups such as school council, eco committee and worship group;
- exploring new social horizons through visits, including residential visits;
- show respect for persons and property;

- show understanding of how society works, through the family, school, local and wider community;
- involving pupils in fund raising and charity activities, clearly living out the Christian value of giving;
- existing partnerships with the community, other schools and churches as well as fostering new links;
- a centre for learning where everyone can flourish, regardless of their background
- be competent in the skills for everyday living;
- listen to and see others' points of view and put forward their own clearly and appropriately;
- make sensible choices in the light of available information/evidence;
- cope confidently with unfamiliar situations, and learn from mistakes;
- take initiative and act responsibly as an individual, member of family, school or wider community.

6. Cultural Development

Cultural development refers to developing an understanding of one's own culture and of other cultures locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, and an understanding that cultures are not static. It concerns developing a sense of personal identity, whilst at the same time acquiring awareness, understanding and tolerance regarding the cultural traditions of others.

It means learning to feel comfortable in a variety of cultures and being able to operate in the emerging world culture provided by television, travel and the internet. Promoting learners' cultural development is linked with encouraging learners to value cultural diversity through, for instance, preventing racism. Cultural development goes beyond learning the norms and skills of a group of people; it also involves understanding cultural development and an appreciation of the inter-dependence of different cultures.

Working together towards a society with a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed.

Community cohesion work and policies and school linking partnerships are aspects of cultural development as are opportunities to explore the worldwide church and the international aspects of world faith.

The provision for pupils' cultural development is based on enriching pupils' knowledge and experience of their own and other cultural traditions, through the curriculum and through visits, and other activities.

6.1 Cultural aims

- To encourage appreciation of own cultural traditions and of the diversity and richness of culture.
- To offer authentic and real representations of cultures throughout the curriculum, without racial or cultural stereotyping.
- To enable pupils to understand cultural diversity by bringing them into contact with attitudes, values and traditions of other cultures, including religious and non-religious ones.
- To encourage an historical perspective by relating contemporary values to the processes and events that have shaped them

- To enable learners to understand the evolutionary nature of culture and the potential for change
- To understand the importance of the arts and creativity in human life
- To reflect on the role of performance e.g. dance and drama, choirs, orchestras, public speaking, and sports for building self-confidence and identity.

Ways in which the school promotes cultural development might include:

- pupils exploring and experiencing their cultural heritage and participating in cultural activities;
- developing and understanding and appreciation of cultures other than their own;
- enjoying and appreciation creative achievements in their own and others' cultures;
- talk about their own interests and achievements and share in the interests of others;
- provide 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;
- an environment where openness and respect shine through every interaction;
- opportunities to explore the Christian cultural heritage - particularly local churches and the cathedral;
- displays around the school showing examples of the range of different cultural influences on the Christian tradition, including artwork produced by pupils;
- explore the cultural diversity of Christianity and address any issues of prejudice and discrimination;
- hospitality, openness and a willingness to learn from one another, including 'welcoming the stranger'.

Opportunities for cultural exploration:

- School partnerships
- Modern foreign languages
- Worldwide web
- Traditions and Rituals - religious or otherwise
- National Emblems
- Means of government e.g. democracy
- Food dishes/ingredients often associated with festivals
- Modes of dress/traditional costumes
- Types of music and dance which enhance different cultures
- Sporting traditions, celebrations and festivals

7. Assessment

Individual assessment of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not a requirement, but the sociograms that the majority of pupils complete twice per year, in addition to other assessment that takes place during our PSHE, RE and worship sessions, enables all pupils to progress in their SMSC journey. Staff are fully aware of individuals where emotional or prejudicial issues prevent progress towards our aims. Staff provide support and strategies to counter negative blocks.

8. Implementation

The development of SMSC in our school is inter-woven into all aspects of our school life and the delivery of the entire curriculum. The necessary time and appropriate learning activities will be included to foster the desired objectives and the distinctiveness of our Church school.