

Littledean Church of England Primary School and Pre-School

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

The Way Ahead report, published over a decade ago, sought to re-establish the distinctive nature of Church of England schools for the new millennium. The Church Schools Review Group, chaired by Lord Dearing stated:

‘We believe that the revelation of God’s love for all humanity within a holistic approach to education is at the heart of the church’s purpose in our Church schools.’

The Way Ahead, Chapter 3 para 3.24

This ‘holistic’ approach is perhaps most effectively described in this policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSCD) in a church school. Whilst it is true that *all* schools are expected to afford due regard and ensure careful planning for the SMSCD of children, the quality and impact of this provision being inspected by Ofsted, Church of England schools will take a particular perspective which will be informed by their Christian foundation and vision. An additional inspection known as SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) will explore how effective our church school is in making provision for children’s SMSCD in every area of its life as a community.

Spiritual Development

Definition

Although spiritual development is a very difficult term to define it is related to:

- ‘the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live;
- relationships with other people and, for believers, God;
- something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical sense and/or expressed through everyday language;
- the universal search for individual identity – with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty, and encounters with good and evil.’

(Spiritual and Moral Development – a discussion paper 1993)

At Littledean C of E Primary School we are very much aware that for children’s spirituality to develop and flourish there must be trust; trust in a God who loves them and trust that the school is a safe place where their doubts, fears and questions will be listened to and respected.

Aims

In order to foster spiritual development at Littledean C of E Primary School we aim to provide children with opportunities to:

- develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God;
- develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of this church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- develop knowledge and understanding of the school’s core Christian values and the biblical teaching that underpins them;

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- develop an appreciation of what it means to be part of a community (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others);
- develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life;
- develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth;
- understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others.

Opportunities

Opportunities for spiritual development are actively sought in all areas of the curriculum. Spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy, and insight will be modelled in different ways by staff and also encouraged and celebrated in the children. There is a shared understanding that the spiritual life of the school is the wellspring of moral, social and cultural development and all that makes the community what it is and what it strives to become.

Through the curriculum we aim to provide opportunities for:

- personal reflection;
- stillness and silence;
- pupils to recognise and express their innermost thoughts, feelings and beliefs;
- enabling pupils to express insights creatively and imaginatively;
- reflecting on the challenging experiences of life and considering different responses to these;
- listening to, learning about and valuing the beliefs, values and feelings of others;
- exploring lives which exemplify qualities universally valued;
- developing understanding that individuals can change things for the better or the worse;
- raising awareness of the hurt caused by unkind behaviour;
- experiencing and valuing the natural world and their part in it;
- valuing and encouraging a sense of wonder and mystery;
- exploring beauty, order, pattern and purpose in the natural world;
- celebrating and being celebrated.

Evaluating Impact

We will be able to evaluate the impact of our provision through the children:

- having the 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;
- demonstrating a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them;
- demonstrating the use of imagination and creativity in their learning;
- demonstrating a willingness to reflect on their experiences.

Moral Development

Definition

Moral development can be defined as personal development relating to human behaviour, especially the distinction between good and bad, right and wrong. For Christians, morality is not just about good behaviour, it is about shared values that are rooted in Christian belief.

Forgiveness is a central value in moral development as is justice within the context of restoring and reconciling relationships.

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Aims

To foster moral development at Littledean C of E Primary School we aim to provide children with opportunities to:

- recognise the difference between right and wrong and begin to understand how Christian values inform a particular perspective on moral choices;
- understand how our moral choices can affect the lives of others;
- be able to work together to agree codes of behaviour that are appropriate for our school community;
- understand the centrality of forgiveness and reconciliation in the life and culture of our school;
- begin to engage with big questions concerning morality and ethical issues in the wider community and in the world, and to realise that each one of us has a responsibility to work for justice.

Opportunities

Through teaching and learning we pursue these aims by ensuring that:

- within the curriculum opportunities are made to link with the Christian Values for Life;
- opportunities for moral development will be sought within the curriculum and actively encouraged in all areas of school life;
- during acts of collective worship we celebrate practical demonstrations of Christian values lived out in the life of the school, local and wider community (e.g. learner of the week award and the values award);
- our Behaviour Regulation Policy makes it clear that our approach is equitable;
- parents and carers are made aware, through our website and other policy documentation, of our school's expectations regarding behaviour, as well as the rewards and sanctions that we operate;
- children are encouraged to resolve conflicts themselves, using skills that have learnt during nurture group sessions or through being modelled by members of staff;
- children are made aware of moral and ethical issues in the national and international context through issues brought up within curriculum areas and also through discussions during collective worship;

Evaluating Impact

We will be able to evaluate the impact of our provision through the children demonstrating:

- the ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and their readiness to apply this understanding to their own lives;
- understanding of the consequences of their actions;
- a willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, co-operating well with others;
- an ability to resolve conflicts effectively;
- interest in investigation, and offering views about, moral and ethical issues.

Social Development

Definition

Social Development can be defined as personal development concerned with living successfully as part of a community rather than alone.

Aims

To foster social development at Littledean C of E Primary School we aim to provide opportunities for children to:

- build relationships founded upon the Christian Values for Life;
- gain a clear understanding of the place of the church school within the wider Christian community including local, national and worldwide;
- access pastoral support from school staff with sign-posting to other individuals or agencies where appropriate;
- be equipped to become responsible citizens who recognise the importance of service and working for the 'common good';
- feel a sense of genuine pride in the school and their membership of it.

Opportunities

Through teaching and learning we pursue these aims by ensuring that:

- within the curriculum opportunities are made to link with the Christian Values for Life;
- opportunities for social development will be sought in all areas of the curriculum;
- collective worship will celebrate and reward practical demonstrations of our Christian values such as service to the community, acts of friendship and generosity;
- strong, mutually supportive links will be maintained and developed with our local community through participation in charity events and acts of service;
- strong, mutually supportive links will be maintained and developed with the local and national church and the worldwide Anglican communion through regular worship in the parish church, church members supporting the school through the leading of 'Open the Book', Experience Journeys, Cathedral Leavers' Service etc...
- our Family Support Worker provides pastoral support to children and families who are facing challenges;
- our school community strives to be fully inclusive (e.g. teaching British Sign Language or Total Communication to all, if needed by specific pupils and by modifying our school building to ensure access for all);
- the Senior Leadership Team prioritises support and engagement with networks (eg Subject Leader Network Meetings, West Glos Schools Partnership, SENCO Cluster events, attendance at training organised by the Diocese);
- there is active engagement with parents and carers through our 'open door' policy and active support of our FRIENDS Association.

Evaluating Impact

We will be able to evaluate the impact of our provision through the children demonstrating:

- the ability to 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 social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively;
- an interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.

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Cultural Development

Definition

Cultural development can be defined as personal development concerned with inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which constitute the shared basis for social action. At the heart of cultural development is the capacity to not only understand and appreciate those elements which have shaped one's own life, but also to be open to people from very different backgrounds, and learn how to celebrate their story.

Aims

To foster cultural development at Littledean C of E Primary School we aim to provide opportunities for children to:

- gain a knowledge and understanding of the values from their own culture, heritage, traditions and an appreciation of how they have evolved over time;
- develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the cultures of those whom they interact day by day, as well as other cultures represented in the UK;
- develop a knowledge of the local Christian heritage, through visits to local churches and the Cathedral, and to explore their relationship to it;
- develop a knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of Christianity through links overseas, RE, Collective Worship and events in school;
- understand the relationship between religious belief and culture through a creative and challenging RE curriculum;
- understand what it means to be part of a community characterised by openness, hospitality and an eagerness to learn from one another.

Opportunities

Through teaching and learning we pursue these aims by ensuring that:

- within the curriculum opportunities are made to link with the Christian Values for Life;
- the curriculum will be delivered using creative and imaginative teaching strategies which allow individual gifts and talents to flourish;
- a range of art forms will be used to teach children about Christian heritage and tradition, and also the heritage of other faiths;
- children are given opportunities to respond to events in the media, through collective worship or 'talk times';
- children explore the ways in which cultural, racial and religious prejudice can take root and learn how to recognise this and other ways of discrimination as well as ways to counter it;
- whole school projects which celebrate diversity within local and wider community feature in our curriculum;

Evaluating Impact

Children's cultural development is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage;
- willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities;
- interest in exploring, understanding and showing respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their

attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

SMSCD is the responsibility of all staff and governors as it has a fundamental impact on the quality and nature of the education offered at Littledean C of E Primary School.

The provision for SMSCD and the subsequent impact will be monitored by the Head Teacher along with the Values and Ethos Committee.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Behaviour Regulation

Child Protection/Safeguarding

Drugs Education

Online Safety

SEND

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Inclusion

Teaching and Learning

PHSCE

RE

Date of Review: January 2024

Date of Next Review: January 2027