



Stretton Handley CE (VC) Primary School Spiritual Development Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, including Collective worship, RE Policy, SMSC, Anti- bullying, RSE and PSHE.

At Stretton Handley CE (VC) Primary School we believe that the spiritual, moral, cultural and emotional development of the children in our care is crucial to their development as whole individuals and will influence the way they grow into adults in a more profound way than other areas of learning. Children learn and develop their understanding of these things through many different experiences and through the daily example they see at home and at school. We consider that understanding of self and others is at the heart of spiritual development and is not linked solely to a particular doctrine or faith. Spiritual development is, therefore, accessible to everyone. We see spiritual development as the way children acquire personal beliefs and values, especially on questions about religion, whether life has purpose, and the basic personal and social behaviour. It is also about what our school provides through its whole curriculum, through collective worship, through its ethos and climate to help children make sense of these questions and about what it does to help them respond to life and various forms of experience.

As a Church school we believe that children's spiritual development is particularly important and have agreed this policy after discussions held with the whole school community, in order to provide more cohesion and structure to the experiences the children have.

We have agreed the following definition of spiritual development as being appropriate for this school, whilst accepting that there are many other ways in which it can be described.

Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence, which are of enduring worth. The most significant lessons in school occur when children learn about themselves, who they are and where they fit into the great scheme of things. It is characterised by reflection, the attribution of meaning to experience, valuing a non- material dimension to life and intimations of enduring reality.

Aims

Based on the School's aims and Vision statement we have identified the following aims for the development of spirituality:

- **worship-** to help all our pupils to begin to develop the ability to be still, to listen and to reflect
- **beliefs** - the development of the personal beliefs
- **a sense of awe and wonder** - being inspired by the natural world, mystery or human achievement
- **feelings of transcendence** - which give rise to belief in the existence of a divine being and/or resources to rise above everyday experiences.

- **search for meaning and purpose** - responding to challenging experiences, reflecting on the origins and purpose of life
- **self-knowledge** - an awareness of oneself in terms of thoughts, feelings, emotions, responsibilities and experiences and the development of self- respect
- **relationships** - recognising and valuing the worth of each individual; developing a sense of community and the ability to build up relationships with others
- **creativity** - expressing innermost thoughts and feelings through for example, art, music, dance, literature and crafts; exercising the imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight
- **feelings and emotions** - the sense of being moved by beauty or kindness; being hurt by injustice or aggression and the growing ability to recognise and control emotions.

Therefore, we see spiritual development as an important element of a child's education and fundamental to other areas of learning. The notion that pupils will develop spiritually indicates that this is an area in which children can and do make progress.

The steps to spiritual development might include:

- recognising the existence of others as independent from oneself
- becoming aware of and reflecting on experience
- questioning and exploring the meaning of existence
- being able to appreciate other points of view
- developing personal views and insights.
- applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to

Provision for spiritual development

Spiritual development is something that takes place in every area of school life, across the curriculum, and in non-curriculum times. Members of staff provide a role model for the children by sharing in the joy of discovery and in expressing a sense of awe and wonder.

Opportunities for spiritual development will be closely related to:

1. the **ethos** of the school
2. all subjects of **the curriculum** and their cross curricular links
3. **Collective worship**

1. The **ethos** of our school is clearly stated and reflected in our aims. It is based on Christian values and beliefs and respect for all individuals including themselves is paramount. The ethos is further developed

- in the atmosphere of the school
- in the quality of the relationships
- in the way in which we help children to deal with conflict, loss, grief or difficulties

2. In many aspects of **the curriculum** children encounter questions about the origins of the universe, the purpose of life, the uniqueness of humanity and the meaning of truth. They are encouraged to reflect upon these questions in their broadest sense.

In particular, Religious Education will promote spiritual development in the light of the teachings of the great world religions, and particularly in our school, through Christianity. As a Church School, we place special emphasis on the specific teaching and beliefs of the Christian faith, both within the daily life of the school and through the curriculum.

Across the curriculum the school will:

- Provide opportunities which foster a spirit of enquiry and open-mindedness
- Encourage the development of an imaginative approach to the world
- Create an atmosphere where children and adults can speak freely about their beliefs and things that matter to them
- Develop an environment in which awe and wonder and reflection and quietness are an integral part. This will be achieved through development of areas in the outside environment e.g. reflection area, through a reflection and contemplation area in school.

All curriculum areas offer opportunities for spiritual development. We have identified some of these as follows:

- Art – being creative and imaginative, expressing appreciation of other’s work
- Design and technology – learning to be creative, appreciating the work of others and how problems can be solved
- English – being inspired and excited by literature, using our imagination, asking questions
- Geography – developing a sense of community, expressing awe and wonder at the natural world, discovering the immensity of distances
- History – learning about brave and determined people from the past who have done what they believed to be right, developing the ability to empathise, being amazed at how life has changed
- Information technology – feeling amazement at the things computers can achieve and how we can find information from across the world
- Maths – developing an understanding of patterns and order, understanding symbols
- Music – responding to music with our emotions, using imagination, creating our own music and appreciating the skill of others
- Physical Education – having a sense of achievement at becoming better, faster, more skilful, learning to work with others
- Personal, social and health education – learning about communities, feeling valued, looking after our bodies, understanding right and wrong
- RE – thinking about ‘big’ questions, learning respect and tolerance, feeling empathy with others
- Science – feeling excitement and a sense of awe and wonder, asking questions

This will be achieved through **a variety of learning experiences**, which provide children with opportunities to:

- discuss matters of personal concern
- develop relationships with adults and peers
- develop a sense of belonging to a community
- explore the values and beliefs of others and deepen their knowledge and understanding of their own
- discuss religious and moral questions
- understand why people reach certain decisions and how those decisions affect their lives
- experience silence and reflection

3. **Collective worship** is a time which provides space within our school day to specifically and clearly offer children opportunities

- to explore and share beliefs;
- consider the importance of prayer, meditation, and silence;
- consider the relevance of ideas and beliefs to their own lives;
- think about the needs of others and develop a sense of community; and appreciate the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them.
- to re-affirm, interpret and put into practice the values of the school. It provides the time to celebrate the various achievements of members of the community that are held to be of worth.

Evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed through consultation with the whole staff and Governors, with parents through the annual questionnaire and with children through our School Council. It has links with other policies:

- Religious Education
- Collective Worship
- Teaching and learning
- Bullying and behaviour
- PSHE
- Equal opportunities and racial equality
- Special Educational needs

The aims of this policy should be taken into consideration when these policies in particular are being reviewed but also curriculum policies. It will be reviewed in accordance to the timetable in the School Improvement plan and Self Evaluation Policy.

