



Westgate Primary School Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education Policy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At Westgate Primary School we recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC) plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education and environment that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop:

- their own values and beliefs;
- spiritual awareness;
- high standards of personal behaviour;
- a positive, caring attitude towards other people;
- an understanding of their social and cultural traditions;
- an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the cultures.

1.2 The SMSC policy provides the school with the opportunity to meet our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- As a school we recognise the importance of these values because:
- people, staff as well as pupils, achieve better when they feel valued;
 - our beliefs and values influence the way we behave and the community that we live in;
 - education is about the development of the whole person.

2.0 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 school community, local community and country.

3.0 SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Spiritual Development Aims

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
- Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences.
- Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.

3.2 Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire understanding about their inner self. The term applies to something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses or expressed through everyday language.

3.3 Spiritual development has to do with relationships with other people and, for believers, with God. It is to do with recognising the unique value and worth of each individual, including oneself and the subsequent development of self respect. It is to do with the development of feelings and emotions and the sense of being moved by beauty and kindness or hurt by sadness and death. For our very young pupils it is to do with a sense of awe, wonder and mystery. Ultimately, spiritual development is a search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live.

3.4 The potential for spiritual development is open to everyone and is not confined to the development of religious beliefs or conversion to a particular faith. However Religious Education and collective worship will play a major part in promoting pupils' spiritual development at our school.

3.5 At Westgate, our planned collective worship will offer pupils the opportunities to explore and share beliefs; to learn the value of silence, meditation and prayer; to think about the needs of others and to develop a sense of community. Our pupils are taught that all our collective worship assemblies are 'special'. They are taught to approach the assembly in a special way, i.e. in silence and with respect.

3.6 Our Religious Education syllabus provides our pupils with the opportunity to learn about Christianity and other faiths and to understand how religious teaching can relate to some of life's fundamental questions. Class teachers have the opportunity to teach the broad objectives of the Leeds Agreed Syllabus for RE in a sensitive way; allowing pupils to discuss matters of personal interest and concern in a range of areas; such as their own uniqueness, special people, sacred writings and the awe and wonder of the natural world.

3.7 Spiritual development is also supported by the whole curriculum. In science, for example, children can study life and growth and experience the awe and wonder of light and other phenomena. Teachers will also give pupils the opportunity to ask questions and the confidence to pose their own theories and hypotheses. In all subjects, pupil's efforts and achievements will be valued, particularly their creative work in English, Art and Music. In those same subjects, feelings of awe and wonder will be generated through the power of stories and poetry, works of art and music.

4.0 MORAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Moral Development Aims

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

- Distinguish between right and wrong.
- Show respect for the environment.
- Make informed and independent judgements.
- Recognise the unique value of each individual.
- 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.

4.2 Moral development is concerned with pupils' ability to make judgements about how to behave and act and the reasons for such behaviour. It requires knowledge and understanding and includes questions of intention, motive and attitude. It is concerned with developing a knowledge of right and wrong based on decisions of moral principle which are understood and shared by other people in society.

4.3 At Westgate Primary School our clearly stated aims and school rules (appendix 1) are based on moral absolutes. They provide a framework of personal and social values which guide and help our very young pupils as they grow towards the acquisition of their own personal morality.

4.4 Our values include:

- respecting other people, valuing their rights and property;
- helping other people, particularly those less fortunate than ourselves;
- self discipline;
- taking responsibility for one's actions;
- acting considerately towards other people;

- telling the truth;
- being fair;
- valuing our school and its place in the community;
- respecting the natural environment.

We reject:

- bullying and cruelty;
- irresponsibility;
- cheating and deceit;
- selfishness.

4.5 We take these values seriously. They underpin the quality of relationships and the standards of behaviour in our school. All our pupils know our rules, which are prominently displayed and constantly reinforced and explained in assemblies, through the planned curriculum and through the handling of day to day incidents that arise. Pupils learn that there are consequences for themselves and others if these rules are infringed.

4.6 Our pupils have a clear idea of what is expected of them. They know what is allowed at Westgate and what is not. They also have a very well-developed sense of what is 'fair'. This concept of fairness is upheld and valued by all the staff who are prepared to listen to pupil's views of incidents with respect in order to seek the truth and impose sanctions accordingly.

4.7 Moral development in school builds on the child's experience in the home and we value the partnership of parents in our pupils' moral development. Parents are informed of our values in our Prospectus, in the Parents' Handbook and by the publication of our school aims and rules in the main entrance to our school. Our school is also very open and welcoming. Parents can see our aims and objectives in this area at first hand as they help alongside teachers or support special events, both in main school and the nursery.

5.0 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Social Development Aims

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

- Form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- Learn about the value of service in the school and wider community

5.2 Social development is closely related to the development of moral principals. It is concerned with the skills and personal qualities necessary for individuals to live and function effectively in society.

5.3 At Westgate Primary School children are encouraged to see themselves as part of the whole school community and to accept group rules. Learning how to relate to others and learning how to take responsibility for their actions are important aspects which underpin our school and classroom rules. (Appendix 1).

5.4 At Westgate we also actively promote a whole school approach to classroom organisation and planning that facilitate a variety of planned strategies to enable pupils to learn a range of social skills and attitudes. Working in groups or with partners, children develop skills of co-operation, e.g. leadership and taking turns, patience and collaboration. This is particularly true of practical or investigative activities in mathematics or science or in games and P.E. when children actively practice skills of teamwork and co-operation.

5.5 Children are also taught to manage their classroom resources from the earliest age. In the nursery children tidy their toys and play equipment away at the end of each session, helping the teacher but also learning independent skills by matching toys to templates. By Year 2 pupils have progressed and become responsible for the management of all their books and equipment, including shared classroom resources such as reading corners and for centrally stored whole school resources like the reading scheme books and the playtime toys. There are rotas for some of these responsibilities but pupils are also encouraged to take the initiative themselves.

5.6 Our pupils are also taught to respect and look after our very old school building, keeping it clean and safe for everyone's use and enjoyment. This is reinforced by high standard of presentation and display by

the teaching staff, not only in their classrooms but in other important areas such as the library and hall. We believe as a staff that our example in valuing our school and respecting its environment, including all the people who work in it, will lead to our perceptions being shared by the children. Children must value the society in which they function if they are to value its rules and social mores.

5.7 Appropriate social behaviour is positively praised and reinforced, both formally and informally. Children are praised by their teachers and all the adult helpers in school, including lunchtime staff. Commendable examples of social behaviour are also noted publicly and discussed in Celebration assembly.

5.8 Inappropriate social behaviour is always challenged at the time of the occurrence. Children are reminded of the way we have all agreed to behave and are warned formally if necessary that a sanction may follow. (See Behaviour and Discipline Policy).

5.9 Each year, classes negotiate their own classroom rules and develop a Class Mission Statement. This presents an excellent opportunity for the children to discuss why rules are necessary and what happens if there is not consensus.

6.0 CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Cultural Development Aims

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

- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in our school, local community and Britain, and how these influenced individuals and society.
- Develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment.
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions.

6.2 Cultural development is concerned with an increasing understanding of the beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills which together form the basis of identity and cohesion in societies and groups.

6.3 At Westgate we are concerned with both developing the cultural interests our pupils already possess and exposing them to broader cultural experiences in order to enable them to develop new awareness and understanding. We encourage pupils to respect and value their own culture as a first step to respecting the culture and values of others.

6.4 Cultures change and grow over time. Otley is an old West Yorkshire market town with a rich history. The majority of our pupils come from residentially stable Otley families and our humanities syllabus reflects this. However, Otley is part of a widening multi-cultural society centred around Leeds and Bradford and it is important that our curriculum reflects this too, particularly (but not only) in English, MFL, RE, Art, Music and the Humanities. Our schemes of work include the study of different ethnic cultures and faiths, (see RE Policy) and our children are taught to respect the values, customs and cultural heritage of their future fellow citizens.

6.5 Our school is 150 years old and it has always enjoyed strong links with the local community, which we value and seek to enhance. We receive support from the local community in school and we support a range of community events and projects. These include annual participation in the Carnival and the Victorian Christmas Fayre, Otley Town Council initiatives and collaborative work with the Family of Schools. There is a strong folk dance tradition in the town which we contribute to with our after school Country Dance Club.

6.6 We also encourage and praise pupils' own cultural interests and achievements gained outside school, e.g. Brownies, karate, ballet, swimming and soccer. Pupils bring their awards and certificates for recognition in our Celebration assembly when they share their interest and achievement with the school.

6.7 In school we seek to enrich, deepen and broaden pupils' experience of all aspects of culture, whether aesthetic, mathematical, literary, technological, musical, scientific or religious through all the aspects of the curriculum and the other areas of learning that we provide. Recent cultural education has included:

- Museum visits
- Music projects and performances

- Theatre performances
- Art, Music and Dance workshops from other, non-UK cultures
- Poetry workshops

7.0 Teaching and Learning

7.1 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. Teachers will inspire pupils through the enthusiasm for and modelling of learning. Teachers at Westgate Primary School will use creative strategies and challenging questions to engage pupils in their learning and relate it to their own experiences.

7.2 All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

7.3 Class discussions across the curriculum, and particularly in PSHE, 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 etc.;
- 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;
- Develop empathy, respect, open mindedness, sensitivity, understanding, forgiveness and critical awareness.

7.8 Many curriculum areas provide opportunities to:

- Listen and talk to each other;
- Learn an awareness of treating all as equals, and accepting people who are different from themselves in terms of their personal beliefs, physicality, ethnicity and ability;
- Agree and disagree;
- Take turns and share equipment;
- Work co-operatively and collaboratively.

8.0 Extra-Curricular Activities

Personal development is also enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities which provide opportunities for SMSC and for inspiring pupils to broaden their experience and horizons.

9.0 Individual support

Children identified as vulnerable or needing additional support in their personal development spiritually, morally, socially and culturally are allocated time with our learning mentor to support their needs. This will take a form appropriate to each child and their needs, and may be ongoing or time limited, individual or small group, in or out of class or at break times.

This policy was agreed in February 2021, and is subject to review every three years.

Signed: (On behalf of the governing body)

Signed: (Head teacher)

Date: 8th February 2021