



Beaminster
St. Mary's Academy

Where children come first; belonging and building together
Respect † Trust † Kindness † Friendship † Responsibility

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy

Where children come first; belonging and building together
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Rational

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the child is recognised as being of fundamental importance for the education of all children by Local Governing Board, staff and parents/carers of our school.

It is taught through all subjects of the curriculum and in particular RE, Collective Worship and PHSE. It supports all areas of learning and can contribute to the child's motivation to learn. It is recognised that such development will be most successful when the values and attitudes promoted by the staff provide a model of behaviour for the children.

In later years, it can enrich the individual's appreciation of life's experiences and their relationships with others.

School Ethos

Our school vision and values underpin our work at Beaminster St Mary's Academy and give a framework for both school improvement and our everyday life together. Our vision and values underpin everything we do and informs every decision we make.

Vision: Where children come first: belonging and building together

Values: Respect, Trust, Kindness, Friendship and Responsibility.

Biblical underpinning: 'Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. Matthew 19:14

The values and attitudes promoted by the staff influence the behaviour and attitudes within the school. The quality of relationships and the atmosphere within the school reflect an appreciation of their shared values. The biblical underpinning creates the foundation for our life together: breaking down barriers and entering together into the fullness of God's Kingdom. A values based education succeeds not when pupils have learnt about the values, but when those values start to influence their normal behaviour and become the identity of the school.

Spiritual Development

Spiritual development is relevant to all children not only those who come from Christian homes. In developing the spirituality of children, we help them to become aware of:

- The human search for meaning and purpose of life which may lead to an understanding and belief of God
- Encountering and experiencing God.
- The joy of being alive
- The beauty of the natural world
- The mystery and wonder of existence
- The world of imagination and creativity
- The value of the non-material dimension of life
- The need to understand oneself and one's feelings
- The need to value oneself and one's feelings.
- The need to recognise the feelings and achievements of others
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (eg about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for personal and corporate prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world.

In this way, spiritual development encourages:

- Self awareness
- Reflection
- Reasoning
- A sense of enduring identity
- Good relationships
- Co-operation and empathy
- The formation of long-term ideals
- Curiosity
- Imagination
- Faith

The school will promote spiritual development through:

- Fostering high self-esteem by encouraging children to take risks or face challenges in their learning within a secure and positive environment.
- Demonstrating appreciation for work of the child's imagination and provide opportunities for them to use their own creativity and imagination.
- Offering opportunities for aesthetic experience in art, music, dance, and literature.
- Making time for stillness and reflection which may lead to children coming to the threshold of prayer.
- Posing questions that encourage children to consider issues of meaning and purpose.
- Developing good listening skills in the children; the school will show that it is listening to the children through its response to issues raised, by them, via the Pupil Council.
- Showing that it is not always possible to provide an absolute answer and at such times it is a positive experience to value a variety of interpretations and responses.
- Improving co-operation and understanding in relationships, providing opportunities such as group activities where children have constructive and enjoyable interaction with others; it is important that they sometimes work with those children who they would not normally choose as partners.
- Fostering emotional well-being by encouraging children to express their feelings and to have the ability to control their emotional behaviour.
- Developing the capacity for evaluative reasoning and critical thought by encouraging children to look beyond the surface and ask big questions
- To explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way they impact on people's lives.
- To support and develop existing or emerging religious beliefs
- To have confidence to express ideas, views and opinions, even if others do not agree.

These opportunities appear across the curriculum although are clearly scheduled in RE, Collective Worship and the Creative Arts. As a school, we value opportunities presented within PE and Mathematics, along with our work in the IPC in the broader range of subjects such as science, history, DT etc.

Moral Development

This relates to the child's developing understanding of what is "right", "wrong" and "fair". The School will try to build on the moral training within the home while accepting that there might be different approaches between home and school.

Moral development is concerned with:

- Developing the child's awareness and understanding of the moral code of the communities in which they live; these may or may not be statutory.
- Helping the child to realise that to enjoy rights we have to accept responsibilities.
- Developing the child's understanding of why rules are necessary.

- Developing the child's self-discipline so that rules are observed as a point of principle and not out of the fear of sanctions.
- Giving the child the knowledge and ability to question and to reason so that they are capable of deciding on the most appropriate action after considering the consequences of an action.
- Develop the skills necessary to explain their own behaviour.
- Value physical well-being, privacy, feelings, beliefs and rights of others.

The School will promote the moral development of the child by:

- Accepting proper authority and doing as they are told.
- Showing respect to all adults in school e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, Lunchtime supervisors and Volunteers and Visitors.
- Having a consensus of values that are stated clearly and owned by everyone, especially the children and involving the child in the evaluation of these.
- Building up the self-esteem of the child.
- Encouraging everyone within the school to behave in an acceptable way towards one another.
- Training children in understanding the consequences of their actions.

It is important that there is a consistency in the approach to this amongst the staff. Opportunities to promote moral development will be provided during Circle Time, RE, PHSE, Collective Worship and the School Council.

At our school our Moral Code is underpinned by belief in:

- Telling the truth
- Keeping promises
- Respecting the rights and property of others
- Being considerate to one another
- Caring for those who are less fortunate
- Accepting responsibility for one's own actions
- Self discipline

We will not accept:

- Bullying
- Cheating
- Deceit
- Cruelty
- Irresponsibility
- Dishonesty
- Selfishness

Social development

Development in this area enables pupils to become conscientious participants in firstly the society of the family and then progressively, the class, the school and the wider community. Provision for social development should balance the positive, while at the same time satisfying elements of belonging to a group or society with the demands and obligations such membership requires.

Cultural Development

Development in this area allows the child to recognise that all cultural groups are distinctive. Culture is the embodiment of shared beliefs, knowledge, customs and values of that group. The child needs to appreciate the distinctive features of their own culture and those of others.

This will help children to answer the questions “Who am I” and “Where do I fit in?” We need to remember that cultures are dynamic and are constantly being re-shaped. We look to help children engage with different cultures, faith, beliefs beyond West Dorset.

The School will promote cultural development through:

- Exposing children to a wealth of stimuli from their own culture and those of others. This will be taught through the whole curriculum in particular RE, Literacy, Art and Music. Visits out of school and visitors to the school will support this teaching.
- Encouraging participation in and appreciation of the wealth of cultural traditions and the beliefs associated with these.
- Encouraging tolerance and appreciation of the beliefs, value and customs of different cultures.
- Opportunities to nurture the cultural development of the child exist in all creative areas - PHSE, RE and collective worship.

Collective Worship

St Mary’s is a Church School and as such the promotion and the understanding of Christianity and its values is a key part of Collective Worship. Our separate Collective Worship policy details this.

In Collective Worship children will be given the opportunity to:

- Be part of a community
- Think about the needs of others
- Explore and share beliefs
- Worship God and pray.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every year.
Date for review: Autumn Term 2023