

St Christopher's School

A Brighton College School



A POLICY ON THE SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS

(This policy applies to EYFS)

Context

The 1988 *Education Reform Act* requires a school's curriculum to 'Promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society'.

St Christopher's School was established in 1927 in accordance with Anglican forms of worship. Today, it embraces pupils of all faiths and of none.

Our Principles

- At St Christopher's, the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is considered to be a whole-school issue
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development should be promoted not only through all subjects of the curriculum, but also through the ethos of the School and assemblies
- The School should encourage pupils to explore and to understand the principles of the Christian faith, whilst affirming, welcoming and understanding other faith traditions and to provide the necessary means for this to happen. The School must also endeavour to provide support for pupils from a non-Christian tradition so that their faith is nurtured and encouraged
- The development of positive values and attitudes should be clearly linked to the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural values
- The School's *Code of Conduct* underpins expected behaviour in the school community and is clearly linked to the moral, social and cultural development of its pupils

Definitions

Spiritual Development

Spiritual development is associated with the search for meaning and purpose in life. It relates to a dimension of life which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses, but has much to do with feelings and emotions and attitudes and beliefs. The term 'spiritual' need not be synonymous with 'religious'. All areas of the curriculum should contribute to pupils' spiritual development.

Moral Development

Moral development is concerned with pupils' ability to make judgements about how they should behave and act, and the reasons for such behaviour. It refers to their knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes in relation to what is right or wrong.

Social Development

Social development refers to the development of abilities and qualities that pupils need to acquire if they are 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.

Cultural Development

Cultural development refers to the development of knowledge and understanding, and the appreciation of differing cultural beliefs, customs and traditions. A central theme concerns the development of a sense of personal identity, whilst at the same time acquiring awareness, understanding and tolerance regarding the cultural traditions of others.

Practical Implications

- The implications of this policy shall pervade all areas, activities and aspects of the school's work and life
- The requirements of this policy are to be incorporated within programmes of study across the curriculum, and also within other whole-school policies where appropriate. Examples of the ways that pupils' SMSC development is incorporated into schemes of work are included below.

PSHEE

In a program of weekly PSHEE lessons, children are encouraged to consider a range of Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural and Economic topics.

From Reception to Year 2 these are sometimes taught explicitly or might be taught as part of a wider topic. From Year 3 to Year 8 these are usually explicit lessons on specific PSHEE topics. These are some of the topics which are covered in 'Life Skills' which have particular relevance:

In Year 1

The importance of rules
How to play with others
Coping with fear, anger and frustration
Developing Self-confidence
Fairness

In Year 2

Choosing a friend
Caring for the environment
Journeys round the world
An ideal community
Friendship web
Selfishness and stealing
Cultural diversity

In Year 3

Ways to calmness
Citizenship in action
Coping with fear and loneliness
Feeling good

Easing stress
Moral dilemmas
Fairness and unfairness
Rights and responsibilities
Making choices
Yoga breathing for a calm mind
Religious worship
Religion and the family
Wedding customs
Meditation for a peaceful mind
Dictatorships and democracies

In Year 4

Ways to calmness
Rules for living - The 10 commandments
Choosing a hobby, sport, career
belonging to a family
Senior Citizens
Accessibility for everyone
Elections and voting
Mindfulness
A healthy mind
Feel good – look good!
Forgiveness and fairness
being responsible
Britain and the world community

In Year 5

Vegetarianism and religious diets
Coping with exam pressure
Communication – good listening
Getting on with people – bullying
Friendships
Playground arguments
Government in the UK
Political parties and opinions
Voting
Fairness
Sex Education – Growing up

In Year 6

Child abuse
Sex Education – puberty
Understanding death
Dangers of technology - On line safety
Learning styles
Confidence and shyness
Bullying – consequences
Divorce and separation
Honesty and the Law

Legal ages
Police
Diverse World – racism
Stereotyping, ageism and sexism
Careers

In Year 7

Positive thinking – self-esteem
Sadness and depression
Relationships – sexual attraction
Values
Power of the Media
War
Nato and the UN
Bullying – understanding the bully
Environmental issues

In Year 8

Body image
Sex Education – intercourse and contraception
Gambling
Part of a community
Bullying – standing up for ones-self
Drugs / alcohol / smoking
Coping with pressure and exams
European Union
Well-being

(The complete list of Life Skill topics can be seen in the ‘Life Skills Scheme of Work Overview)

Assemblies

Regular assemblies are a very important part of life at St Christopher’s with a form of collective worship on most days of the week. Assemblies are led not only by the Headmaster, but by other members of staff, pupils, visitors to the school, including parents, governors, representatives of charitable organisations and from a variety of different faiths.

Assemblies celebrate the successes and achievements of pupils and are an opportunity to come together as a school for collective reflection and whole school guidance on Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural concepts. Christian hymns and prayers promote the values of love, respect and compassion and assemblies also raise awareness, understanding and respect of other cultures, faiths and beliefs.

Singing as a whole school strengthens social bonds and is in itself a moving spiritual experience. Singing is very important at St. Christopher’s and there are many opportunities for the children to sing together each week and also during church services. The singing of the school hymn, particularly at poignant moments, for instance the leaver’s assembly at the end of the year, is a powerful unifying experience where everyone feels a sense of pride in the school and gratitude for everything we take from it.

Thursday is the days for our 'guest assemblies' which are usually by an external guest speaker; these have recently included speakers who have delivered assemblies on: Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, The work of Water-aid, Sussex Wild life trust, The Starr Trust, Kiya Survivors and many more.

Members of our own staff also participate in the guest assemblies teaching 'Life Skills' to the whole school. For example assemblies have been delivered on 'Being the best person you can be'. 'How to accept failure', 'Setting goals', 'Understanding that people are all different.' 'The importance of good team work', 'Never giving up' and many more.

Assemblies are also a perfect forum to respond quickly to particular pastoral and social issues which might arise throughout the term and need addressing quickly and on a whole school basis.

The Pre-Prep also have their own separate weekly assemblies on Wednesday mornings where age specific 'Life Skills' can be taught. On some occasions the Middle and Upper school have assemblies and lectures which are specifically relevant to their age group.

Whole School Events

Church Services held at the local churches of St. Phillips and All Saints to celebrate Harvest Festival, Christmas and St. Christopher's Day. Participating in Christian ceremonies allows children to understand the importance of such ceremonies to people of all faiths around the world and it allows those who are not of a particular faith the opportunity to see the value of collective worship, prayer and reflection in a quiet space such as a church. Singing as a whole school is

Language Days are held as whole school events at various points through the year. It is recognised that language is a key facet of humanity and understanding the importance, the development and the uses of language enable us to understand different cultures around the world and how they developed, ultimately it helps us to begin to get an insight into the nature of humanity itself and how key factors of humanity are common to all races and cultures..

Chinese New Year, in conjunction with the learning of Mandarin throughout the year, is a chance for children to understand more about the culture of China and so to begin to expand their consciousness of all the varied cultures which found around the world. Celebrating an event previously only the domain of another country and culture is a way of acknowledging and embracing the fact that we are now part of a global community.

Donate a Day gives children the opportunity to once a year to go out into the community to offer their services to support local people, initiatives and charities. Each year group spends the day on a different activity, for example the children in the lower school put on their school play for senior citizens at a local church group, older children headed to Devil's Dyke to help with woodland management, other pupils went to the local newspaper to help with their charity appeal and another year group went to plant trees at a local park. Each year all the children are involved with this special event which gives them a feeling of connection and function within their local community.

Sports Days allow children to experience a celebration of their physical prowess, both individually and as part of a team. Children are able to see learn how their individual efforts contribute to the whole success of their House. Physical exercise and sport are very important

especially in modern times where obesity and mental illness are growing problems among young people and healthy regular exercise can be a great antidote to these, creating natural stimulation and a sense of well-being as well as creating a forum for personal and shared triumph.

Competitions for science, art, spelling, general knowledge and other subjects create a forum for children with all different talents to excel. Art exhibitions show-case those who find solace and release through artistic creation.

Concerts allow musicians to show their skills, from new found and developing to those who are gifted and talented. The Choral Society is an opportunity for pupils, teachers and parents to come together and share the enjoyment of singing. Performing together strengthens bonds between all participants and the music produced is valued by everyone in the school.

Cross Curricular Links

A large part of the Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural education in the school is not taught explicitly, but is taught within the context of other subjects by the use of cross-curricular links.

The teaching of these important concepts is embedded in the curriculum because they are very powerfully explained as part of a broader field of learning. Opportunities in all subjects are exploited to explore Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural concepts.

Shown below are examples of how Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural concepts are taught through cross-curricular links:

Spiritual Development

Through the teaching of Religious Studies, we provide opportunities for spiritual development. Children consider and respond to questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. We help them to recognise the difference between right and wrong through the study of moral and ethical questions. We enhance their social development by helping them to build a sense of identity in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society. Children explore issues of religious faith and values, thereby developing their knowledge and understanding of the cultural and religious context of their own lives.

In **Art**, spiritual development is promoted through helping pupils to explore ideas, feelings and meanings, to make sense of them in a personal way in their own creative work, and to make connections with the experiences of others, as represented in works of art, craft and design.

Mathematics often deals with concepts that cannot easily be seen or experienced in material terms. Older pupils learn algebra, which deals in a level of generality and abstraction. There are very many examples of mathematics, which are very beautiful if viewed and understood in context – it is not inconceivable that our older pupils will start to find the delight in these. Pupils will also be stimulated to think about infinity and infinitesimals and that sometimes numbers behave in strange, wonderful and counterintuitive ways.

Languages - Knowledge of another culture always encourages wonder and questions in children. For example, the magnificence of Fontainebleau helps to add to their awareness of our extra dimension, as do the great Parisian monuments. Throughout their time at St Christopher's, the children's attention is drawn to the similarities and differences between the British and Francophone world (and later to the Spanish and Chinese). Through these comparisons, pupils

will leave St Christopher's with an understanding that all humans are part of one group and that all have something extra to offer and to learn from the world.

The study of **History** involves discussion of various topics related to religion including the Medieval Church, the beliefs of past societies and the Reformation. All of these topics may provide opportunities for children to think carefully about spirituality and to develop their own beliefs in an informed way.

In **English**, the children are encouraged to discuss their responses to texts openly and honestly. Many of the texts we use throughout the school deal with the spiritual aspect of life. The study of the themes in literature is closely connected to emotions, attitudes and beliefs. An example of a text used with older pupils is Wilfred Owen's poem *Asleep*, which addresses the religious convictions of the soldiers who fought in the trenches of the Great War. We discuss how desperate situations affect spiritual feelings - sometimes enhancing them and sometimes destroying them.

In **Science** children learn about the awe-inspiring nature of the world in which we live. A study of space, for example, deals with vast distances and when this is compared to life on a cellular level, it cannot fail to create a sense of awe and wonder.

Rabbi Jonathan Sachs said that it is **Music** which makes us more than just a handful of dust. We believe this is a truth and music at this school brings with it a powerful spiritual experience, which is particularly noticeable when the whole school sings together. There is a natural link between spirituality and music, arising from humankind's earliest awareness. Children are encouraged to experience the wonder and moving quality of the many kinds of music explored within the curriculum.

PE helps pupils' spiritual development by fostering a sense of achievement in our pupils, whilst developing positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

Moral Development

In **Classics** the study of the pantheon of deities leads to discussion of good and bad – the fickle action of the gods. Study of the *Iliad* and its individual heroes demonstrates the good and bad actions of men e.g., Achilles' treatment of Hector's corpse.

In **Art**, moral development is promoted through helping pupils to identify and discuss how artists, craftspeople and designers represent moral issues in their work (for example, Picasso's condemnation of warfare in his painting *Guernica*).

Mathematics deals, in its own terms, with right and wrong, with truth and falsity, with implications and conclusions, with reasons and causes. It encompasses the need for accuracy and honesty – it is not sufficient, for example, to get the correct answer via fallacious working. In this respect it plays a subtle part in encouraging a sense of morality within the school curriculum.

In **History** some topics, such as cruel sports, punishments or atrocities are by their nature inevitably brutal. Such topics are of great interest to children. A conscious effort is made to arouse sympathy with the victims and to discourage gloating or other inappropriate responses.

In **French** the visits to France encourage the participants to think for themselves and to be responsible members of a group. They understand the importance of courtesy even when they may not be particularly interested in proceedings and they learn to be tolerant of other's ideas. The planning beforehand and the discussion afterwards reinforce these themes.

When hosting **Games** matches and playing away, children develop a social awareness. They are taught to know and respect what is acceptable and not acceptable, since they are representing the school, and also how to behave when we have visiting coaches.

In **English** we often discuss moral issues. These sometimes arise out of texts we are discussing or in general discussions or talks the staff have with pupils. The children in a Year 6 were asked to prepare a talk to give to the rest of the class on any moral issue where they disagreed with their parents. Some lively discussions followed! One poem often used with Year 6 children is *Death of an Aircraft*, by Chares Causley. In this poem, which is set during WWII, the people of Kastelo town in German-occupied Crete are prepared to die rather than to betray their fellow countrymen. This poem always throws up many moral issues, but we often end up looking at the way in which moral and ethical standards are affected in times of conflict and, in particular, by war-time situations.

In **PE**, moral development is promoted through pupils gaining a sense of fair play based on rules and the conventions of activities, developing positive sporting behaviour, knowing how to conduct themselves in sporting competitions, and accepting the authority and support of referees, umpires and judges.

ICT teaches pupils about reporting inappropriate material on the Internet and thus protecting other users.

Pupils are taught to look at how we treat the world us when looking at geomorphology, settlement and environmental issues in **Geography**. The chasm of wealth and opportunity which exists between more Economically Developed Countries and Less Economically Developed Countries is brought out when settlement, tectonic activity (human responses and effects), economic activity and environmental issues are discussed.

Such issues do arise in **Music** during class discussions about the lives of composers and how this affects the way people view their music (e.g. Wagner's attitude to Jewish people and the use of his music by the Nazi regime; the use of lyrics by rap artists like Eminem etc). Children are encouraged to seek the right moral path appropriate to the moves of modern society. **Music** links closely with moral issues and occasional songs are used to encourage children to approach topics like racism (spirituals and the links with slavery) and environmental issues.

Social Development

In **Art**, social development is promoted through helping pupils to learn to value different ideas and contributions and develop respect for the ideas and opinions of others, and to work on collaborative projects, making the most of different strengths and interests within a team.

Mathematics is taught in part through discussion and sharing of ideas. It is made plain that communication of ideas is just as important as comprehension of the problem. Sometimes

pupils are encouraged to work in small groups or teams (maybe even competitively) and this engenders worthwhile focused social interaction.

Some **Historical** topics are inevitably contentious by their nature, e.g. the Crusades, the Reformation, slavery and the treatment of women in past societies. We try to treat such issues sensitively. Past inequalities and intolerance are to be understood in the context of the societies in which they existed, but are also to be contrasted with more enlightened modern attitudes.

Games helps the children to interact with other peers and adults in different contexts, at matches, during games, Christmas parties, parents' matches and sports outings to watch international matches.

The children are taught to co-operate in **Science** when they work in small groups to carry out experiments. This is particularly helpful to integrate new children into the school.

In **English** the pupils are often asked to work in groups. By doing this they learn about the importance of listening to the views of others and of working together to achieve a given goal. Plenty of time is given to the discussion of social issues. The award-winning children's book "Feather Boy" is an example of a modern novel which the VI form pupils study. This novel raises many important social issues. When we recently studied the book we looked at the effects of bullying on both the victim and the bully. We looked at the problems children face when their parents' marriage is going through an acrimonious breakdown.

In **PE** social development comes through helping pupils develop social skills in activities involving cooperation and collaboration, responsibility, personal commitment, loyalty and teamwork, and considering the social importance of physical activity, sport and dance.

ICT helps develop pupils' responsible use of data in not disclosing passwords/user names and keeping the net safe from viruses etc.

In looking at economic activities in **Geography** we are able to study the history of industrial growth in the UK from 1750 and make comparisons with currently emergent industrial nations.

Cultural Development

Classics gives insight into the origins of European culture: architecture, language, art and sculpture.

In **Art**, cultural development is promoted through helping pupils recognise how images and artefacts can have an influence on the way people think and feel and to understand the ideas, beliefs and values behind their making, relating art, craft and design to its cultural context (for example, the use of icons in religious art and corporate advertising).

Mathematics is an important but often unnoticed part of contemporary culture. While it might be taught as a particular scientific discipline, it is as important that it is seen as part of our culture, almost as one would teach History or Art, Music or Drama. It is hoped that pupils also learn a little of the background to mathematical ideas (e.g., zero) that were developed in eastern cultures long before their development in western society.

History provides ample opportunities for broadening awareness and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, religious, philosophical and other achievements of people from all cultures, faiths, ethnic groups and nations of the world. Pupils are encouraged to respect religious views that may be different from their own. A conscious effort is made to study historical characters that provide role models from various ethnic, racial and national backgrounds, and of both genders.

An historical perspective on the horrors that have resulted from intolerant attitudes in former times is essential to an understanding of these issues. However there can be dangers, especially when history is misused in an unbalanced way. We strive to avoid these. When studying past conflicts, pupils are encouraged to appreciate all points of view and are actively discouraged from taking sides or glorying in victories.

The teaching of **Languages**, French, Spanish and Mandarin encourages an awareness of differences and similarities between British and other cultures: French geography introduced in the course book, LJR; Year 4's day trip to France; IV form week-long trip to Draveil; individual visits to French secondary schools; visit to French Lycée; topics on Francophone countries; and French cuisine.

Learning Mandarin and celebrating Chinese New Year with a dancing Lion eating cabbage on the front playground raises the children's awareness of this culture which has ever growing global significance.

In **English** the understanding and appreciation of differing cultural beliefs is developed through discussion which often arises from studying relevant texts. An example of this would be Edwin Morgan's poem, *The Suspect* where the innocent protagonist is interviewed by the police. When the V Form recently studied this poem the way in which suspects and victims are treated by the law was discussed. Also discussed was the way in which minority groups and those from different cultural backgrounds might be treated differently by the police and the issues of human rights in different countries and in different cultural settings.

Music from many cultures is heard by pupils during music lessons and they are encouraged to discuss any relevant thoughts or experiences in class work which broadens their approach to such issues.

Pupils' cultural development is fostered in **PE** through experiencing and understanding the significance of activities from their own and other cultures, recognising how activities and public performance gives a sense of cultural identity, and considering how sport can transcend cultural boundaries.

Individual countries are studied in **Geography**, so the diversity of cultural styles across the globe emerges.

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