

GARSTANG ST THOMAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY: Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy (SMSC)



VISION

Our vision is to be an excellent Church of England school which is forward thinking and strives for continual development.

We seek to support all our children in knowing that they are loved by God and encourage them in reaching their full potential academically, physically and spiritually.

We seek to develop in our children a great love of learning and for them to become confident, resilient, independent, inquisitive individuals who are able to both lead and serve others joyfully.

OUR MISSION

Our Christian values flow from the person of Jesus Christ and are:

Love • Courage • Creativity • Friendship • Responsibility • Peace • Compassion • Truthfulness • Respect & Reverence • Humility • Forgiveness • Trust • Thankfulness • Hope • Generosity • Wisdom • Perseverance • Service • Justice

These values underpin the work that we do as a Church of England school. Both adults and children in our school are expected to support and live out these values in order to create and develop a positive and caring environment in which all can grow, learn and work.

We promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our staff and children work towards our vision by focusing on the following every day:

WE ARE GUIDED BY GOD

WE LOVE EACH OTHER

WE LOVE LEARNING

WE WONDER WHY

WE JOYFULLY SERVE

WE LEAD

WE PERSEVERE

At Garstang St Thomas Church of England Primary School, the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) is considered to be fundamental to the life of the school. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development is promoted across the curriculum through all subjects. Through the ethos of the school, all children and staff are encouraged to reach their full potential academically, physically and spiritually.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development in a church school is distinctive because these four aspects of the school curriculum are inextricably rooted in the reality of God the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Religious Education (RE) curriculum in a church school is the place where excellent and distinctive SMSC can be seen most clearly.

At Garstang St Thomas Church of England Primary School, we strive to create a learning environment which promotes respect, diversity and self-awareness and equips all of our pupils with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they will need to succeed in their future lives. We therefore aim to provide an educational provision that gives children opportunities to explore and develop:

- Their own values and beliefs.
- Their own spiritual awareness.
- Their own high standards of personal behaviour.
- A positive, caring attitude towards other people.
- An understanding of a range of social and cultural traditions and choices.
- A comparative understanding of their personal culture and social norms with those of others.

SMSC plays a significant part in the ability to learn and to achieve. All curriculum areas have a contribution to make to the child's SMSC development. Values, principles and spirituality will be explored in the curriculum, especially through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, RE and collective worship. Cultural traditions will be recognised and celebrated; the integrity and spirituality of other faith backgrounds will be respected and explored.

All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as valued individuals and showing respect for children and their families. Children will learn to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others.

We aim to develop responsible, active citizens who engage positively in democracy and public life, showing respect for diversity and a commitment to strengthening community cohesion. Central to our Christian mission is the principle of loving one another. Our PSHE curriculum supports this by helping pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and by promoting respect, tolerance and appreciation of the diverse communities that make up modern Britain.

Spiritual Development

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful.

Psalms 139.13-14

Spiritual development within RE in a church school enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

Spiritual development focuses on an individual's own personal beliefs and values and their resulting behaviours. Through spiritual development, children are able to understand their own feelings and emotions and this enables them to reflect and to learn.

Curriculum opportunities enable pupils to:

- Be curious and express feelings of delight and wonder (scientific investigations, new life, the global landscape).
- Empathise and consider the viewpoints of others (debates, drama activities, discussing feelings and empathising with characters in familiar stories).
- Consider how a belief can change people's lifestyles (RE, investigating communities and faiths, historical case studies).
- Discuss what they think they have achieved and what they need to do to be successful in the future (self-assessment and target-setting activities).
- Exploring their relationship with God and the sense that they are His children, unique and loved by Him.
- Exploring and experiencing prayer and worship from a variety of Christian traditions.
- Giving thanks to God for all aspects of school life.
- Discussing and reflecting upon key questions of meaning and truth, such as the existence of God, the origins and purpose of the universe, good and evil, and life after death.

Moral Development

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12.2

Moral development in a church school is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.

Moral development means exploring, understanding and recognising shared values, and considering issues of right and wrong. We work towards children developing an understanding of what is morally right and wrong. From this basis, pupils are supported to develop the ability to make judgements and to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and/or behaviour.

Curriculum opportunities promote moral development through:

- Codes of conduct and class rules in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- Clear and consistent rewards and sanctions for behaviour that children understand and believe to be fair.
- Class and school worship that discusses moral values and sets clear expectations.
- Activities that enable pupils to express opinions and demonstrate their values.
- Discussing the choices made by the pupils and others and the resulting outcomes (including characters in class novels, historical figures, etc.).
- The values of 'Justice' and 'Forgiveness' are explicitly taught and modelled throughout the school.

Social Development

As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.

John 13.34-35

Social development in RE in a church school develops pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice.

Social development involves learners working effectively together and participating successfully in the school community as a whole. During a pupil's social development they gain interpersonal skills that allow them to form successful relationships and to become a positive team member.

At Garstang St Thomas Church of England Primary School, social skills are promoted through:

- The modelling of positive social behaviour by all staff.
- Year 6 buddies for Reception children.
- Years 5 and 6 pupils serving as head of the table.
- LAMDA preparation and examinations.
- Oracy-related provision in school.
- Speech and language provision in school.
- Breakfast and after-school club activities.
- Sporting activities.
- Turn-taking and team-building activities.
- Pair and small-group work within the classroom.
- Working with others across the local community.
- The values of 'Friendship', 'Generosity', 'Trust', 'Courage' and 'Perseverance' are promoted and modelled throughout the school.

Cultural Development

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
Galatians 3.28*

Cultural development in RE in a church school provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

Cultural development enables learners to develop an understanding of their own culture and of other cultures locally, nationally and internationally. It also means learning to feel comfortable in a variety of cultures and valuing cultural diversity.

Our learning environment and curriculum introduces children to a regional and global perspective in life through:

- Links with local and international schools.
- Stories from different cultures.
- Firsthand experiences through local visits, theatre, art and artists.
- Visitors from the local and international community.
- Being part of National and International fund-raising events.
- Studies of a different lifestyle, including different food, dress, festivals and places of worship.
- Learning about other cultures when raising money for charity.
- Children are taught to understand the lifestyles and choices made by different cultures and faiths.

Implementation of the Policy and Review

The implementation of this policy and the planning and teaching of SMSC is the responsibility of all staff.

Monitoring and review

The planning and coordination of SMSC are the responsibility of the Headteacher, supported by the RE Subject Leader, who also:

- Supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in the subject, and by providing a strategic lead and direction for SMSC;
- Speaks to the children about different elements of SMSC and uses this to inform future planning.
- Reviews planning for SMSC across the curriculum, evidence of the children's work, and observes elements of SMSC across the school.

APPENDIX A

A Guide to Spirituality for the GST School Team

In a Church of England school, spirituality is at the heart of enabling children and adults to “live life in all its fullness” (John 10:10). Spirituality is not simply about religion or worship; it is about helping every child and adult grow in awareness of themselves, others, the world and God. Church of England guidance describes education as “deeply Christian, serving the common good” and welcoming people of all faiths and none.

What Is Spirituality?

A helpful way to understand spirituality is through the image of:

- Windows – looking out on the world with awe, wonder and curiosity
- Mirrors – reflecting on our thoughts, feelings and experiences
- Doors – responding, acting and growing through what we discover
- Traffic Lights – moments to pause, stop, notice and reflect



These ideas help children and adults recognise spirituality in everyday school life.

Windows

Children are given opportunities to notice and wonder:

- **A beautiful piece of music**
- **A story that inspires compassion**
- **Patterns in nature or science**
- **Moments of joy, sadness or celebration**

Adults can ask:

- **What do you notice?**
- **What makes you wonder?**

Mirrors

Children are encouraged to reflect deeply:

- **How did this make you feel?**
- **What have you learned about yourself?**
- **Why does this matter?**

Adults model reflective thinking and create safe spaces for discussion.

Doors

Spirituality should lead to action and growth:

- **Showing kindness or forgiveness**
- **Caring for others or the environment**
- **Responding to injustice**
- **Making thoughtful choices**

Adults help children consider:

- ***What could we do next?***
- ***How might this change us?***

Traffic Lights

Spiritual development often needs intentional pauses:

- **Red – stop and be still**
- **Amber – think and reflect**
- **Green – move forward with purpose**

These moments may happen during worship, prayer, classroom reflection or everyday conversations.

What Does This Mean for Staff?

Every adult contributes to the spiritual life of the school.

Staff can nurture spirituality by:

- **Creating moments of stillness and reflection**
- **Encouraging curiosity and thoughtful questioning**
- **Valuing children's ideas and experiences**
- **Modelling kindness, respect and forgiveness**
- **Providing opportunities for awe and wonder**
- **Welcoming big questions without needing all the answers**

Spiritual development happens across the curriculum, in collective worship, outdoor learning, relationships, playtimes and daily interactions.

Collective Worship and Spirituality

Church of England guidance describes collective worship as “inclusive, invitational and inspiring.” Participation should never be forced, and all pupils and adults should feel welcomed and respected, whatever their background or belief.

Collective worship offers opportunities for reflection and stillness, prayer and contemplation, encountering Christian stories and values, and developing hope, belonging and community.

A Spirituality-Rich School Looks Like...

- **Adults and children feel valued and listened to**
- **Reflection is part of everyday life**
- **Big questions are welcomed**
- **Diversity and difference are respected**
- **Awe, wonder and creativity are celebrated**
- **Relationships are rooted in dignity, love and hope**
- **The school's Christian vision is lived out daily**

Ultimately, spirituality is about helping every child and adult flourish within our caring Christian community.