

**BANKS ST. STEPHEN'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**POLICY FOR SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

The school's Mission Statement embodies these essential aspects of children's development.

***Mission Statement***

At Banks St. Stephen's C.E. Primary School, we are committed to providing a happy and caring environment, in which each member of the school is encouraged to achieve the highest possible standard in all aspects of school life. We aim to do this through the provision of a wide range of stimulating and enjoyable activities, within a Christian ethos.

The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of children depends very much upon the ethos of the school, that which is at the very heart of the school. It cannot be observed but is the very essence of what school is about. It manifests itself not only in the curriculum but in the whole life of the school. The ethos is developed through the school's philosophy of learning and life, its high expectations in every aspect of school, the value it places on positive and caring relationships and the emphasis it places on shared core values such as loving, caring, sharing, trust, forgiveness, tolerance, respect, courtesy, politeness and honesty.

School should be a centre of excellence. It should be professional not just academically but in all aspects of school life.

It should be welcoming with a happy, friendly and busy atmosphere, where the children feel valued, secure and at ease.

The ethos should reflect mutual care and concern between staff, pupils, parents, governors and any other person connected with school.

The school should provide varied opportunities for experiencing awe and wonder and joining in celebration and thankfulness. This is not restricted to acts of worship but can be part of the pupils' experience across the curriculum. The school is very much a family.

***Spiritual Development***

Spiritual growth involves growth in most areas of a person's life - moral, physical, imaginative, artistic and emotional. Therefore spiritual development can be fostered in most areas of the curriculum and must not be left to Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Spiritual Growth depends on the acquisition of some ways of looking at 'life, the universe and everything'. It is these ways of looking which we are seeking to develop in children. This is a lifelong task. What happens in school can only be a beginning and we can only point children in the right direction and take them a little way towards maturity and along their own spiritual journey.

Spirituality is not simply about prayer and worship; it is also knowing about and being ourselves, being aware of and caring for others and knowing about the world around us.

Spirituality is about being involved in the world, not about ignoring it.

Spirituality is concerned with relationships and with the way we treat others, and will be fostered or hindered by the quality of relationships and caring in the life of the school.

Spirituality is how people act and react to what they put at the centre of their lives.

We aim therefore through the curriculum:-

1. To recognise the value of relationships that each person is a person of worth
2. To pursue issues that impinge upon what a person is and give value and identity to life
3. To sustain the self esteem of pupils in their learning experiences
4. To develop a sense of self-knowledge and self awareness and acknowledgement of the principles and values by which we live
5. To provide opportunities for the expression of imagination, inspiration, insight, empathy and understanding throughout the curriculum
6. To encourage the setting aside of time when pupils reflect upon the inspiring quality of the world whether it be a sense of the power of nature or of the creative imagination of human beings
7. To promote opportunities of stillness, silence and reflection
8. To foster the emotional life of the pupil particularly with regard to the experience of feelings
9. To encourage the search for meaning
10. To promote the quest for learning
11. To share the joy of learning

### ***Artistic***

Art can provide a language, or rather techniques for expressing feelings, attitudes and our innermost thoughts. It can also provide for pupils examples of how others have conveyed their moods, feelings and reactions.

Children will also have an awareness of the world around them and will be aware of beauty, pattern and design. They will experience moments of awe and wonder and will be able to respond and reflect on those experiences of God's creation. The study of art and techniques of art develop the ability to pay close attention to the world. Through observation and the practice of creativity pupils can come to view the world with greater insight than they might otherwise have. By becoming visually aware and able to look at the world around them in greater detail, not only will pupils see with artists eyes they will be developing skills to use in meditation and contemplation.

Art also provides a medium for developing children's imagination and expressing their imaginative creations and can also contribute by looking at and involving children in the artistic outpourings of religion.

### ***English***

Creative writing contributes to Spiritual development through creative writing and perhaps particularly through poetry. Creative writing enables children to explore their own feelings, to respond to and express their reactions to others and to express their reactions to their own experiences and to the world around them.

### **Truth bearing stories**

English techniques offer ways of exploring and finding the truth in parables, riddles, folk tales, simile, metaphor and poetry. All these can open children's eyes to the importance of 'non-scientific truth' and non-cognitive ways of knowing and point to the idea of truth bearing stories, i.e. stories that are not literally true but which contain truth.

Poetry also offers a medium for expressing inspiration, intuition and insight and imagination.

Story can help children enter into worlds and minds of others and into situations that the children might not otherwise explore.

Drama offers techniques for exploring relationships, for developing relational skills and entering into empathising with the experiences of others.

### ***Mathematics***

Maths too can make a contribution to a spiritual and Christian view of the world in that pupils can develop a sense of pattern and order in creation and sense of the underlying unity of all things.

### ***Music***

Music can make many of the same contributions to spiritual development as English and Art. It can convey feeling and emotion and insights in ways that are perhaps not otherwise possible and so enable pupils to enter into the emotions of others and express their own. Music also has the power to 'lift' people out of themselves and point beyond itself to greater realities. It can 'stir the soul'.

### ***Physical Education***

Human beings are a unity of body, mind and spirit and physical activities can contribute to pupils' command of their bodies to a healthier life and to developing self-confidence. Team games can develop co-operation and the sense of belonging to a group. Movement and Dance also offer ways of expressing feelings and responses to exercise and the opportunities to express those responses and feelings in creative ways.

### ***History and Geography***

Children will have the opportunity to consider the values and beliefs of others. Visits to other places e.g. York Minster, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral will help to inspire awe and wonder.

### ***Science***

The exploration of the world by children can seek to engage children imaginatively and evoke from them their personal response to the world rather than simply requiring a scientific reporting of what is observed. For example a scientific account of a rainbow would speak only of the refraction of light. To contribute to spiritual development we would also need to speak of a rainbow's beauty and power to evoke awe and wonder.

Science that fosters spiritual growth will point children to its proper role of describing and explaining how the world works, but it will also point children to the limitations of science and the need to ask questions about creation.

Children will learn about their own bodies and their own well-being. They will also learn about the wonders of animals and plants in the world.

### ***ICT***

ICT eg incredible Web-sites, quick access to information, rapid communication to every corner of the world, digital cameras, interactive whiteboards will make a positive contribution to awe and wonder.

### ***TECHNOLOGY***

This curriculum area will provide a similar contribution as children seek to build elaborate and sophisticated models, often incorporating control technology.

### ***RELIGIOUS EDUCATION***

R.E. will encourage pupils to make informed and reasoned judgements on moral, social and cultural issues.

R.E. can show how people's faith has given meaning and purpose to their life and how their vision of what life ought to be like has changed their behaviour and often changed the world.

Pupils will encounter diversity in the contexts of shared human experience and religious traditions.

### ***COLLECTIVE WORSHIP***

In our school there is surely much to give thanks for; much to praise; much to hope for and request; much about which to feel contrite.

Collective worship, sensitively planned, will support the progressive development in the child of:

- Sense of awe, wonder and mystery
- Sense of transience and change
- Sense of pattern, order and purpose
- Awareness of personal worth, uniqueness and identity
- Awareness of others and relationships
- Awareness of community, its demands, values, rituals and celebrations
- Awareness of loss, suffering and sadness
- Opportunity to worship God
- Opportunity to be aware of transcendence
- Opportunity to hear insights and reflections from various spiritual teachers
- Opportunity to develop their own sense of inner space.

### ***Charities***

Support of charities eg NSPCC, Children in Need, Comic Relief, Poppy Day etc. develop an awareness of the needs of others and give an opportunity for the children to reflect on their own lives. They can also offer support and help to these causes.

### ***Moral Development***

The school's Mission Statement clearly states that 'we are committed to a happy and caring environment in which each member of the school is encouraged to achieve the highest possible standards in all aspects of school life'.

The school's high expectations, the value it places on positive and caring relationships and the emphasis it places on the shared core values listed at the front of this policy eg honesty, fairness, forgiveness are of paramount importance in the moral development of the children.

Religious Education and Collective Worship have distinctive roles to play but it is important to recognise the contribution all areas of the curriculum can make to moral education and development.

Throughout his/her life the child is a moral agent and becomes increasingly responsible for important choices. School plays an essential role in teaching children the difference between right and wrong. It is in school where children are placed, many for the first time, with many other young children in a structured environment and needing to learn proper codes of behaviour and social skills.

### ***Behaviour Policy***

This is the main thrust of the school's expectations regarding behaviour and attitudes towards others. The emphasis is very much on a positive approach, where children are rewarded for good behaviour through the use of stickers, stamps, house points and also in our Celebration Assembly. We also have a whole school individual award scheme, where children receive bronze, silver or gold certificates depending on how many points they have received (see school's behaviour policy).

### ***The "Golden Rules"***

We will:

1. Always be polite, kind and respectful to everyone.
2. Look after our school and everything in it.
3. Respect our own and other people's belongings.
4. Walk calmly and quietly around the school.
5. Listen to each other carefully and follow instructions.
6. Work as hard as we can in everything we do.

### ***Circle Time***

This is a special time specially set aside for the children to discuss any worries or concerns they might have eg bullying, sadness etc. They are encouraged to set the agenda themselves and this can provide a forum for problems to be discussed and overcome.

### ***Sex and Health Education***

Sex and Health Education also give important opportunities for moral issues to be discussed.

### ***Charity Support***

Children in Need, Poppy Day etc give children the opportunity to reflect on important issues and to develop their own particular stance and view.

### ***Teams***

For example Football, High 5's, Swimming give children important opportunities to experience winning, losing, co-operation, support and the value of working with and helping others.

The adults in school, through their expectations, attitudes and demeanour will provide important role models to the children.

### ***Social Development***

The school aims to provide "a happy and caring community". Children need to learn to relate to each other and to adults as they are prepared for 'their future lives'.

Pupils need to be provided with opportunities to relate to one another positively, to work together, to take responsibility and to become involved with the school and wider community. They should be encouraged to celebrate each other's work and to develop a sense of fair play.

Adults in the school are again, important role models. They should at all times encourage positive relationships, desirable attitudes, respect for others and respect for property.

Older pupils too are given the important responsibility of looking after our younger pupils in the playground and in classrooms at wet play-times.

### ***Curriculum***

In every area of the curriculum pupils are afforded opportunities to interact with other children in a wide variety of group situations e.g. Mathematical and Scientific investigations, Technology, P.E. Games & Dance, Drama, Role play etc.

These are invaluable opportunities to learn about the shared core values listed at the front of this policy eg caring, sharing, trust, tolerance, respect etc.

### ***Collective Worship and Circle Time***

Collective Worship and Circle Time give children important time to reflect about themselves and their relationships with others.

### ***Play-times and Lunch-times***

There are occasions when the children find themselves surrounded by other children in a less structured environment. Here there are excellent opportunities to put into practice the values that school cherishes. The school's Behaviour Policy emphasises positive and caring relationships. Children, especially the younger ones, are learning how to play and live together amicably. The supervision and intervention of adult supervisors can make a major contribution here in encouraging socially acceptable behaviour particularly through their active encouragement of constructive play.

We also operate a "Make Lunchtimes Positive" initiative. In our school we have Year 5 children who take on the role of "Play Leaders". They spend break times and lunch times with the younger children in order to teach, and help them to play games in the classroom and the playground.

### ***Schools Council***

The Council provides the children with a democratic forum to discuss issues relevant to them eg playground equipment, food and drink etc. It gives them the opportunity to have a voice in the running of the school.

### ***Extra-Curricular Activities, Charities, Visits and Visitors***

These provide the pupils with invaluable opportunities to pursue particular interests either individually or as members of a team. They learn respect for others and their achievements. In a team they learn to win and to lose fairly and the importance of co-operation and of supporting one another.

School visits, including the 3 day Outdoor Pursuits Residential for older pupils, provide them with invaluable social experiences.

Visitors to school eg our Member of Parliament, Health Education Staff, the local Policeman, people from local businesses etc., help to give children a wider perspective of the world. Our support of charities and visits from their officers help to develop the awareness of children of the plight of others and hopefully inspires in them sensitivity and positive ways of helping others. We are preparing them to be useful and valued citizens.

### ***The involvement of children in the Community***

The school has close and friendly links with the Church. Major festivals and the school's Leavers' service are celebrated in the Church and the Vicar leads whole school assemblies on a regular basis.

The school choir performs a variety of Christmas items at local nursing homes and also as "guests" at the annual "Evening of Brass and Carols" organised by the Banks Brass Band at Banks Leisure Centre.

The Friends of the School organises a variety of events, which involve the children in the community e.g. Treasure Hunts, Discos etc.

School also has close links with local High Schools (e.g. Arts, Technology, Sports) and local Primary Schools (Sports, Music etc).

### ***Cultural Development***

The cultural development of children is inextricably linked to their spiritual, moral and social development, as they are all inter-related.

Although we aim to develop in the pupils an understanding and wide knowledge of their own culture and traditions, it is essential too that we develop in them an understanding and sensitivity to other cultures and traditions. British Values are taught alongside Christian Values.

We can provide opportunities for cultural development through the work and study of artists; in Geography and History through the study of other countries, cultures and periods of history and in R.E. through the study of other faiths and cultures. Music too, provides children with invaluable insights and experiences related to their own and other cultures. Children can use drama and role-play in a variety of situations to enhance their cultural, as well as their social and moral understanding. French lessons introduce the older children to the language and customs of people in France.

The visits of artists, and of actors, as well as visits from school to the Theatre (e.g. A Christmas Carol), Art Galleries (eg Chapel Gallery, Walker Art Gallery), Cinema (e.g. National Film Week), and Museums (eg Catalyst, Liverpool Museum) contribute a great deal to the cultural development of children. Recent Class Project visits such as Ribchester, Martin Mere, Blackpool, Cuerden Valley, Blue Planet Aquarium, Croxteth Hall, Gawthorpe Hall, Quarrybank Mill, all provide children with important cultural experiences. We have previously invited Vikingsaga into school, who organised a Viking Day, which included role-play, building shelters, cooking, weapons and family-life. Henry VIII has also been invited to school during Tudor studies.

The links with our own Church and visits to other places of worship such as the two cathedrals in Liverpool, the Synagogue in Southport and the Mosque in Liverpool all help to contribute to the cultural development of our children. We have also organised visits from Jewish and Muslim teachers into school to lead sessions on Pesach and the Koran respectively.

Review Date: September 2017

Next Review: September 2019