

# St. Joseph's RC Primary School

## Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy (SMSC)

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"I came so that you may have life, and have it to the full."

– John 10:10



*Faith*

*Respect*

*Confidence*

*Resilience*

*Empathy*

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## Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy (SMSC)

### Our Mission Statement

*'I came so that you may have life - and have it to the full'* John 10:10

At St Joseph's RC Primary School we believe that the planned promotion of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children is fundamental to the work of our school. This policy relates to the whole life of the school. Of particular importance is the example set by adults in the school, the quality of relationships and the standard of daily collective worship.

### Aims and Objectives

At St Joseph's we recognise the uniqueness of each child and provide opportunities and experiences so that they may become the best that they can be.

We strive to raise the aspirations of our children by creating 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, whilst teaching them how to become responsible and productive members of the community.

We encourage children to recognise their value and place in the world and teach them to reach out, through prayers and actions, to those in need.

Our curriculum provides a wide range of artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities that encourage pupils to work together using their imagination and problem-solving skills in their learning.

St Joseph's is a happy and safe place in which to learn. We provide this environment knowing that children learn, grow and develop best when they are secure in their surroundings. Activities are planned that allow children to reflect and empathise with others, whilst allowing them to share their opinions and develop their own viewpoints.

We do all this under the safety of God's love and protection.

*This policy adheres to the rights of the child and article 14 where every child has the right to think and believe what they choose, article 13 where every child can express their thoughts and opinions. It adheres to article 31 where every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.*

## **Spiritual development**

Pupils' spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. As their curiosity about themselves and their place in the world increases, they try to answer for themselves some of life's big questions of purpose and meaning. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material wellbeing. As a Catholic school, we place special emphasis on the specific teaching and beliefs of the Catholic faith, both within the daily life of the school and through the curriculum.

### **Aims for Spiritual Development**

- the ability to listen and be still
- the ability to sense, the sacred, the holy, the Divine
- the ability to reflect
- the ability to sense wonder and mystery in the world
- the ability to sense the special nature of human relationships,

### **Objectives for Spiritual Development**

- to develop the skill of being physically still, yet alert
- to develop the skill of being mentally still, concentrating on the present moment
- to develop the ability to use all ones senses
- to promote an awareness of and enjoyment in using one's imaginative potential
- to encourage quiet reflection during a lesson or assembly
- to develop individual self-confidence in expressing inner thoughts in a variety of ways
- to consider the mystery of God and the wonder of his world
- to find an inner confidence and peace

## **Moral development**

Pupils' moral development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right. They are able and willing to reflect on the consequences of their actions and learn how to forgive themselves and others. They develop the knowledge, skills and understanding, qualities and attitudes they need in order to make responsible moral decisions and act on them. The system of

rules and codes of behaviour established in our school is an important early introduction to issues of fairness for all and to the consequences of operating outside the accepted rule system. Pupils are encouraged to understand the need for a common code and to follow it from conviction rather than because of consequences or sanctions. Moral development, based on Christian principles, should enable pupils to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and behaviour.

### **Aims for Moral Development**

- to understand the principles lying behind decisions and actions
- to be able to take moral decisions for themselves
- to assume moral responsibility through our Catholic beliefs and convictions
- to be able to distinguish between right and wrong
- to understand that our beliefs impact on our choices
- to treat everyone as equals as we are all made in the image and likeness of God

### **Objectives for Moral Development**

- to tell the truth
- to respect the rights and property of others
- to keep a promise
- to help those less fortunate than ourselves
- to act considerately towards others
- to take responsibility for one's own actions
- to exercise self-discipline
- to develop high expectations
- to develop positive attitudes
- to conform to rules and regulations for the good of all

### **Social development**

Pupils' social development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global), and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good. They display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to make an active contribution to the democratic process in each of their communities. The school, but in particular the classroom, provides a suitable environment for promoting social development within a Christian context. Pupils learn to lead, to use their initiative and to use individual skills and strengths when working together towards a common goal. The ability to be led, to support others and to recognise the different skills of other group members can be developed when children work co-operatively and are influenced by their own spirituality and morality.

## **Aims for Social Development**

- to relate positively to others
- to participate fully and take responsibility in the classroom and in the school
- to use appropriate behaviour, according to situations based on our moral values
- to engage successfully in partnership with others
- to exercise personal responsibility and initiative
- to understand that, as individuals, we depend on family, school and society

## **Objectives for Social Development**

- to share such emotions as love, joy, hope, anguish, fear and reverence
- to show sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others
- to work as part of a group
- to interact positively with others through contacts outside school, e.g. sporting activities, visits, Masses at Church, music festivals etc.
- to develop an understanding of citizenship and to experience being part of a whole caring community
- to show care and consideration for others by sharing and taking turns
- to realise there are things each person can do well
- to encourage each person to share their talents given by God

## **Cultural development**

Pupils' cultural development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences. They acquire a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' ways of doing things and curiosity about differences. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to understand, appreciate and contribute to culture. In order to make provision for cultural development existing knowledge, interests and experiences are strengthened and then built upon further. In this way pupils gain a deeper understanding of their own culture and the factors which influence it and gain a broader understanding of other cultures and cultural influences. All areas of the curriculum can be used to promote and develop cultural awareness, although the arts, music, dance, drama and art are those used more frequently. Culture gives expression to a community's spirituality, morality and social values.

## **Aims for Cultural Development**

The aims and objectives of cultural development relate to differing aspects of the word 'culture.'

- to develop a sense of belonging to pupils' own culture and being proud of their cultural background
- to express our spirituality and be proud of who we are, our rites and rituals

- to respond to cultural events
- to share different cultural experiences
- to respect different cultural traditions
- to understand codes of behaviour, fitting to cultural tradition

### **Objectives for Cultural Development**

- to develop a love of learning
- to develop an understanding of British cultural tradition, including Catholicism
- to appreciate the values and customs of other ethnic and faith groups which make up modern British society, and the world beyond
- to develop the ability to value current cultural enthusiasms, icons, music and media, critically and independently of peer pressure.

We want our children to develop a balanced approach to retaining the traditions of our Christian society, whilst perceiving in a positive light the contribution of other cultures, faiths and beliefs. This is achieved through enhancing children's understanding of their place in the culturally diverse city of Manchester and wider society, and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity through our Curriculum. Collective Worship is planned termly to recognise key dates within different faiths and cultures such as Ramadan and Passover. Assemblies are followed up and supported by learning in SMSC and RE. Members of different faiths both within our school community, and external visitors, are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within our school.

We participate in great British events such as the Royal Jubilee, Royal weddings, Political Elections, Cultural weeks and Remembrance events. We plan assemblies, which uphold traditional values of empathy, respect and tolerance, which are led by the children. These values are also taught within formal SMSC and RE lessons and on an informal nature throughout the school days.

### **Pupil Voice**

The term 'Pupil Voice' describes how pupils give their input to what happens within the school and classroom. Our desire is for pupils to know that their expertise, opinions and ideas are valued in all aspects of school life. Pupil Voice permeates all levels of our work together, from pupils participating in small group classroom conversations to students establishing procedures, events and contributing to the overarching ethos of the school. Each class has a School Council representative, voted for by their peers. These children meet regularly with the Head Boy, Head Girl and Headteacher to discuss ideas and issues raised. A pupil questionnaire is completed annually. Our Chaplaincy Team apply for this role and meet regularly with the RE Lead to help shape and develop the faith life of the school. Both groups of children are a great asset to our school.

## **Role of co-ordinator**

The named co-ordinator has responsibility for overseeing the planning, the provision and the monitoring and evaluation of SMSC development. The co-ordinator will keep in touch with national developments and will act in an advisory capacity, supporting colleagues. Staff meetings may be used for discussion and the update of information. They will understand the impact that good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development can have on the school as a whole.