

St. John's Church of England Infant and Nursery School



Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education Policy

***'Start children off on the way they should go,
and even when they are old they will not turn from it!' Proverbs 22:6***

Statement of Intent

As a church school everything we do is rooted in our Christian values. At St. John's we teach the children about these core values: Love, respect, honesty, forgiveness, friendship, courage, cooperation, peace, perseverance, trust, patience and understanding.

This is reflected in all our relationships between staff, children, parents, governors and the local community. It is reflected in how we teach, what and how our children learn within and beyond the classroom.

These values are fundamental in the implementation of this policy to ensure that we maintain our distinctive Christian character of which we are proud.

Written by:	Lana Gillam
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Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Date:	Reviewed September 2025
Review frequency:	Every three years
Target Audience:	All Stakeholders

The governing body conducts the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. St John's CE Nursery and Infant School is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.

1. Aims

At St John's Infant and Nursery School we recognise that the personal development of children spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC) plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides children with opportunities to explore and develop:

- their own values and beliefs
- their own spiritual awareness
- their own standards of personal behaviour
- a positive, caring attitude towards other people
- an appreciation of the diversity and richness of their cultures.

This policy relates to the whole life of the school. All National Curriculum subjects provide opportunities to promote pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Explicit opportunities to promote pupils' development in these areas are provided in Religious Education and through school worship, our Values education and PSHE. Children will be encouraged to reflect on the significance of what they are learning, to recognise any challenges to their own attitudes and lifestyle and to recognise a spiritual dimension to their lives.

2. Definitions

a) Spiritual development

Pupils' **spiritual development** is shown by their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values.
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences
- Celebrating the religious and non-religious beliefs and values that all our children bring as part of their family/culture and build awareness and respect for others' spiritual and religious beliefs.

b) Moral development

Pupils' **moral development** is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, readily apply this understanding in their own lives and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of the land.
- understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, and being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.
- willingness to help others

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 and evident in our Values, should enable pupils to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and behaviour.

c) Social development

Pupils' **social development** is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and social-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in the modern world.

The school, and 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. Christian Values, which are central to school life at St Johns', contribute to social development.

d) Cultural development

Pupils' **cultural development** is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others
- understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain
- knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities

3. Christian Distinctiveness

In our school, Christian distinctiveness permeates the four definitions of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the objectives of all other policies. The distinctiveness is a natural extension of the school's vision and aims and is reflected in our Values Education.

a) Spiritual Development

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Listen, be still and encourage reflection
- Develop respect for each individual's spiritual journey
- Foster empathy for others as feeling, thinking individuals
- Develop their capacity for critical and independent thought
- Foster their emotional life and express their feelings
- Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences
- Develop a sense of meaning, purpose and direction in life
- Form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
- Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life
- Encourage imagination, creativity and a sense that there is 'more to life than meets the eye'
- Recognise and reflect on Christian approaches and those of other religions to Spiritual Development.

b) Moral Development

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the unique value and rights of each individual
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others
- Gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes
- Take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others
- Distinguish between right and wrong and in so doing respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Show respect for the environment
- Make informed and independent judgments
- Understand the principles lying behind decisions and actions.

The school sets high expectations through the curriculum, collective worship and our Values which will lead to raised awareness of high moral standards inside and outside the classroom. We encourage children to move gradually from a 'taught morality' to taking responsibility for their own moral decisions.

c) Social Development

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity
- Learn about how people and organisations can support others in the school and wider community

- Relate positively to others
- Participate fully and take responsibility in the classroom and in the school
- Use appropriate behaviour, according to situations
- Engage successfully in partnership with others
- Exercise personal responsibility and initiative
- Understand that, as individuals, we depend on family, school and society
- Develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern accepting and engaging with the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

d) Cultural Development

As a school, we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence individuals and society.
- Recognise Christianity as a world faith in the context of other faiths
- Develop a sense of belonging to pupils' own culture and being proud of their cultural background
- Share different cultural experiences
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions

4. Collective Worship

Daily collective worship is a key vehicle for the delivery of SMSC at St John's. [Please see the separate Collective Worship Policy for fuller details]. Worship is broadly Christian in nature and aims to:

- Promote the school's culture, values and expectations
- Develop a community spirit (through visitors and teaching)
- Explore important moral and social themes
- Promote care for the planet and environment
- Celebrate children's successes and achievements both in and out of the school (Star of the Week and Star Pupil Award), Half Termly Values Champion Award Share and celebrate world cultures, religions and festivals
- Promote racial harmony and respect for all.

5. Curriculum

All aspects of the Curriculum provide opportunity for SMSC development. Through classroom discussions and teaching we will give the children opportunities to:

- talk about personal experiences and feelings, expressing and clarify their ideas and beliefs
- speak about difficult events such as bullying or bereavement
- share thoughts and feelings with other people

- explore relationships with friends/family/others
- consider the needs and behaviour of others and show empathy
- develop self-esteem and a respect for others
- develop a sense of belonging
- develop the skills and attitudes that develop SMSC in children, such as empathy, respect, open-mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness etc

Curriculum areas provide opportunities to:

- listen and talk to each other
- learn an awareness of treating all as equals, accepting people who are different.
- agree and disagree
- experience good role models
- take turns and share equipment
- work co-operatively and collaboratively.

Beyond the classroom, practical activities to develop SMSC will include:

- taking responsibility e.g. school council, safety crew, eco warriors, playground pals
- encouraging teamwork in PE and games
- appreciation of and respect for the work and performance of all children
- hearing music from different composers, cultures and genres
- meeting people from different cultures and countries
- participating in a variety of different educational visits
- use of worship themes to explore important aspects of our heritage and other cultures, e.g. festival days, the patron saints and national celebrations
- opportunities in music to learn songs from different cultures
- following school rules and taking responsibility for own behaviour
- studying the contributions to society that certain famous people have made
- encouraging prosocial behaviour at lunchtime, Star Pupil award given to children who demonstrate the school values during lunchtime
- Values Champion awards, given half termly for children who have demonstrated the value for the half term.

6. Whole-School Opportunities

Children take part in annual Themed Weeks. On a 3-yearly cycle, themes are as follows, with a focus on developing SMSC across the school.

	Distinctive Christian Ethos	SMSC
Year 1	Vision Day	Aspirations Week
Year 2	Trinity Day	Community Week
Year 3	Prayer Day	Outdoor Learning Week

Other annual events take place to promote SMSC and Christian Ethos, e.g. Mental Health Week, Children in Need, World Views Week, Remembrance Day, Electric Umbrella, etc.

7. Links with the Wider Community

The school builds and nurtures its links with the community in a variety of ways which enhance children's awareness and contribute to SMSC development. For example:

- Visitors are welcomed into our school.
- Links with the local Church are active, and worship takes place in Church at least termly.
- Visits to places of worship of other faiths are arranged to support the understanding of different cultures.
- The school supports the work of a variety of charities (Red Nose Day and Children In Need)
- The development of a strong home-school relationship is regarded as very important, enabling parents and teachers to work in an effective partnership to support the children.
- Children will be taught to appreciate and take responsibility for their local environment.
- Liaison with Fair Field takes place to support the primary curriculum and effective transition.
- Weekly newsletter shares the value of the half term, with a quote linking to the value.
- Half Termly Values Champion: Worship ambassadors and leaders share the new value for the term in Worship; Values Champion information sheets are sent home each half term, by the Worship Leader; Children are encouraged to share via Google Classroom how they are applying the value; Values Champions helps promote the use of the school values within the wider community, developing the children's ability to be 'courageous advocates'

8. Promoting British Values

We recognise the need to prepare children to be active, tolerant, community-minded, citizens of the nation in an ever-changing world. We use our School Values to promote these 'fundamental British values' by:

- Including in suitable parts of the curriculum age-appropriate material on the strengths, advantages, and disadvantages of democracy, and how government and the law works in Britain compared to other countries.
- Teaching pupils a broad and balanced curriculum
- Representing the cultures of all our pupils within the curriculum.
- Commemorating World War 1 and 2.
- Ensuring that all pupils have a voice that is listened to.
- Demonstrating how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes, for example, via a school council.
- Using teaching resources from a wide variety of sources to help pupils learn about and understand a range of faiths.
- Using extra-curricular activities to promote fundamental British values.

Through SMSC education we provide pupils, at an age-appropriate level, with:

- An understanding of how they can influence decision making through the democratic process.
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects them and is essential for their wellbeing and safety.
- An understanding of the 'separation of power' between executive and the judiciary

- An understanding that their freedom to choose and hold faiths and beliefs is protected by law.
- An acceptance that people of different faiths and beliefs to themselves (and those with no faiths or beliefs) should be accepted and tolerated and should not be subject to prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

We listen to the views of our pupils and their parents. We operate an open-door policy for the sharing of views and have a formal system in place including:

- Pupil voice
- A regular parents' questionnaire.
- Parents' evenings/meetings.

SMSC provision is reviewed on an annual basis in the following ways:

- The monitoring of teaching and learning and work scrutiny by Senior Leaders
- Governors' Immersion mornings
- Regular discussions at Staff and Governors' meetings
- Annual policy audits
- The development of RE, PSHE and collective worship to reflect the diversity of both our school and society
- The sharing of classroom work and practice

10. Professional Development

It is important to recognise any particular difficulties staff may have in delivering the curriculum and an annual review will determine any co-ordinator input or CPD which may be required.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Collective Worship Policy
- Religious Education Policy