

Spiritual Development Policy



St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

School Mission Statement

To love, serve and learn as Jesus Shows Us

DOCUMENT STATUS

Approved by Governors:	Last reviewed	Date of next review:
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Rationale

We recognise that Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of every child's education. The promotion of a child's spiritual development provides the 'why' of education. In our school, we view spiritual education as:

"... something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and/or expressed through everyday language. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity - with our responses to challenging experiences ...It is to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live".

(Spiritual and Moral Development, April 1993)

We therefore acknowledge that our approach to spiritual development will be a process that allows the child to acquire insights into their personal existence, into the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, into their own beliefs and values. We will recognise the innate dignity and worth of each individual through opportunities that give rise to expressions of character and personal responses.

Purpose

To ensure that pupils' experiences, at least in school, are conducive to spiritual growth so that:

- pupils are open and responsive, aware of their self worth, uniqueness, identity, gifts and talents and are able to celebrate their own and others' achievements;
- pupils are trusting, in themselves, in others and in God;
- pupils are willing to engage, to take responsibility and to do what is right with courage and hope;
- pupils will be able to love others, be generous in spirit and respond well to hardship, limitation, frustration and loss.
- pupils have a sense of awe, wonder and mystery and an understanding of the of quality of silence and awareness
- pupils develop a sense of the Natural World; dark, light, bread/food, trees, sky, wind, water, earth

Broad Guidelines

Through our life in school and our curriculum, we will offer:

- positive and realistic examples;
- positive role models;
- opportunities for discussion;
- support and advice;
- personal target setting.

Spiritual education will be promoted by developing:

1. An attitude to life based on:
 - a development of personal beliefs including religious beliefs;
 - an appreciation that people have both individual and shared beliefs on which they base their lives;
 - a growing awareness of the way in which personal understanding contributes to personal identity;
 - an understanding that one's inner resources provide the ability to rise above everyday experiences.
2. A sense of awe, wonder and creativity inspired by:
 - the natural world
 - mystery
 - human achievement with the arts and science

3. A search for meaning and purpose in life by:
 - developing appropriate responses to the challenging experiences of life such as beauty, suffering and death;
 - being concerned by injustice and aggression and their effect on others;
 - a growing awareness of when it is important to control emotions and feelings and how to use such feelings as a source of growth and human experience;

4. Self-awareness and relationships by:
 - developing self-respect;
 - fostering an appreciation of the individuality of others;
 - recognising that every individual has worth;
 - building up relationships with others;
 - fostering a sense of community;

Practice

Developing a child's spirituality is the responsibility of the whole school community. In St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School, we address spirituality **explicitly** through:

- The teaching of "To know you more clearly"
- RSHE and Theme weeks
- Questioning and exploring the meaning of experience
- Collective Worship
- All curriculum subject areas - where content is suitable
- Drama
- Music
- Reflections
- The teaching of Other Faiths

We also develop spirituality **implicitly** through:

- Actions
- Relationships between staff and children and staff and other adults
- Unspoken expectations
- The building and maintaining of our school ethos led by our Mission Statement
- Interaction between all members of the school community

Planning these opportunities will take the form of highlighting opportunities, within every aspect of school life. It is recognised that the RE Directory, 'To know you more clearly' provides a wealth of opportunities for a child to develop their sense of self within the world.

Evaluation

In St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School we evaluate a child's spiritual development by the extent to which the school provide the opportunities for pupils:

- To acquire insights into their personal existence
- To make sense of their life experiences
- To develop a sense of wonder, awe, reverence and imagination
- To develop the human capacity to go beyond physical, tangible reality
- To develop sense of the presence of God in their lives
- To reflect on and respond to this presence
- To become familiar with the life, words and action of Jesus
- To become familiar with the life, words and actions of the saints and significant Christians
- To hear of how people of other faiths respond to the spiritual dimension of life

We endeavour to provide children with the abilities to promote their spirituality by demonstrating qualities such as:

- Knowledge of the central beliefs, ideas and practices of major world religions and philosophies
- An understanding of how people have sought to explain the universe through various myths and stories, including religious, historical and scientific interpretations
- Beliefs which are held personally, and the ability to give some account of these and to derive values from them
- Behaviour and attitudes which derive from such knowledge and understanding and from personal conviction, and which show awareness of the relationship between belief and action
- Personal responses to questions about the purpose of life, and to the experience of the rich fabric of life itself

(From Spiritual, Moral and Cultural Development Feb 1994)