

St Ambrose RC Primary School
Spiritual & Moral Development Policy
2012

Vision Statement

We at St Ambrose School will grow in the love and service of
Jesus and fulfil our potential within a community
where everyone is valued.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement is for all St Ambrose community
young and old, and is the foundation of the school's purpose.

- St Ambrose school is here to provide a quality Catholic education.
- We embrace the parish of St Ambrose and work in close partnership with the community and home.
- Through high standards and expectations we help everyone to achieve their best in work and play regardless of gender, special needs, disability or race.
- We celebrate success and achievement in all things.
- We show respect and love to others.
- We forgive those who have hurt us.
- We welcome and support those in need and work to create a place where they feel safe and secure.
- We prepare for and share the Sacraments as a family.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

"Spiritual" is not synonymous with "religious"; all areas of the curriculum may contribute to pupils' spiritual development.

Spiritual development is concerned with how an individual acquires personal beliefs and values, especially on questions about religion, whether life has purpose, and the basis for personal and social behaviour questions. It is therefore also about what a school provides - through its curriculum, Collective Worship and its ethos - to help individuals to make sense of these questions, and about what it does to help form pupils' response to life and to various forms of experience, or even to questions about the universe.

The educational mission of the Church is rooted in Christ's mission "that all may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10). This involves the ongoing development of the entire potential of each individual made in the image and likeness of God and finding fulfilment in God alone. *

**Religious Education in Catholic Schools Bishops of England and Wales May 2000.*

There are three principal elements of spiritual development:

- The development of insights, principles, beliefs, attitudes and values which guide and motivate us. For many pupils, these will have a significant religious belief;
- A developing understanding of feelings and emotions which causes us to reflect and to learn;
- For all pupils, a developing recognition that their insights, principles, beliefs, attitudes and values influence, inspire or guide them in life.*

The task faced by school is, then, to find effective ways of developing pupils' drive, sense of identity and self-worth; developing their principles, beliefs and values; including those that have a religious basis.*

**Promoting and evaluating pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development - Ofsted March 2004*

Pupils who are developing spiritually are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- A set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour;
- An awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs;
- A respect for themselves and for others;
- A sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion;
- An increasing ability to reflect and learn from this reflection;
- An ability to show courage in defence of their aims, values, principles and beliefs;
- A readiness to challenge constraints, for example, poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, force, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination;
- A respect for insight as well as knowledge and reason;
- An expressive and/or creative impulse;
- An understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely impact

Schools that are encouraging pupils' spiritual development are, therefore, likely to be:

- Giving pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they impact on peoples' lives;
- Where pupils already have religious beliefs, supporting and developing these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them;
- Encouraging pupils to reflect and learn from reflection;
- Giving pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful;
- Developing a climate or ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected;
- Accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals;
- Promoting teaching styles which:
 1. value pupils' questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns;

2. enable pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning;
3. encourage pupils to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference - for example, asking 'why', 'how' and 'where' as well as 'what';

Pupils' spirituality is promoted and developed through the entire educative process especially through:

- Distinctive nature - ethos;
- Curriculum subjects, especially Religious Education;
- Collective Worship.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

"Moral education helps pupils to acquire knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is right or wrong".

Schools can do much to encourage young people in the early years by providing them with a moral framework within which to operate and, as they mature, by helping them to decide what they hold as right and wrong, why they do so and how they should act - that is, that they should behave well, in accordance with a moral code.

Moral development involves the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil in a social context. Moral development, therefore is about a growing awareness of, and a positive response to, the demands of living as an individual with others in a community. Schools, therefore, need to consider how an individual pupil and, of course, a teacher can best develop in his or her unique way within an identifiable Catholic community.+

+Spiritual and moral development across the Curriculum - Catholic Education Service.

The educational mission of the Church brings to life Christ's new commandment "that you love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34). This Gospel value is lived out in the daily life of the school in many ways including:

- Forgiveness
- Freedom
- Tolerance
- Respect
- Relationships

There are clearly areas where there is a broad range of opinion and there will always be debate about moral values. Schools, teachers, pupils and parents will differ, as well as agree, on some values but they generally help pupils understand the reasons for this.

Pupils who are becoming morally aware are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- An ability to distinguish right from wrong, based on knowledge of the moral codes of their own and other cultures;
- A confidence to act consistently in accordance with their own principles;
- An ability to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions;
- A willingness to express their views on ethical issues and personal values;
- An ability to make responsible and reasoned judgements on moral dilemmas;

- A commitment to personal values in areas which are considered right by some and wrong by others;
- A considerate style of life;
- A respect for others' needs, interests and feelings, as well as their own;
- A desire to explore their own and others' views;
- An understanding of the need to review and re-assess their values, codes and principles in the light of experience.

Schools that are encouraging pupils' moral development are, therefore likely to be:

- Providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school;
- Promoting measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria;
- Giving pupils opportunities across the curriculum to explore and develop moral concepts and values - for example, personal rights and responsibilities, truth, justice, equality of opportunity, right and wrong;
- Developing an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practise moral decision-making;
- Rewarding expressions of moral insights and good behaviour;
- Making an issue of breaches of agreed moral codes where they arise - for example, in the press, on television and the internet as well as in school;
- Modelling, through the quality of relationships and interactions, the principles which they wish to promote - for example, fairness, integrity, respect for persons, pupils' welfare, respect for minority interests, resolution of conflict, keeping promises and contracts;
- Recognising and respecting the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the school and wider community;
- Encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions; for example, respect for property, care of the environment and developing codes of behaviour;
- Providing models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts, assemblies and acts of worship;
- Reinforcing the school's values through images, posters, classroom displays;

People who are developing morally listen to their conscience, the inner sense, informed by their upbringing, experiences and faith or religious beliefs that prompts them to do what is right out of love for others, respect for themselves and regard for the world in which they live.

Pupils morality is promoted and developed through the entire educative process especially through:

- Distinctive nature ethos;
- Curriculum subjects especially Religious Education and PSHCE;
- Collective Worship.

This policy is a working document and may be changed according to the needs of the Children and will be reviewed in 2015.