

# ST MARY MAGDALENE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Agreed Whole School Policy

# Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC)



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Signed ..... Name ..... Date .....

As a Church of England School, we recognise that each person is valuable, precious and **unique** before God. Our school is a community based on **trust**, **honesty** and **love**. We aim to live in **peace** with each other and to **forgive** those who have wronged us, as taught and demonstrated in the life of Jesus. We seek to foster in our members **wonder** in discovery, **thankfulness** for what we have, **compassion** for others and **hope** for the future. We therefore strive to ensure that our delivery of the curriculum meets the needs of each individual and helps foster an environment where the motivation for all to achieve and reach their full potential is at the core of our commitment.

## St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School SMSC Policy

### Vision Statement

**Building on a foundation of Core Christian Values, we inspire and equip our children to acquire confidence, encouraging a thirst for lifelong learning.**

*'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,' Philipians 4: 13.*

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### 1. Values Education

We believe that values education has a crucial role in education. We believe that if the values education underpins everything we do, then it will not only enhance the quality of teaching and learning, but will support the pupils to make a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Our school has chosen to adopt ten Christian values:

- unique
- trust
- honesty
- love
- forgiveness
- peace
- wonder
- thankfulness
- compassion
- hope

We actively teach and promote by:

- staff and governors modelling the values through their own behaviour;
- our school actively encouraging parents to promote the value (through e.g. newsletters);
- the discreet teaching of the meaning of the value during RE lessons and Collective Worship

### 2. British Values

The DfE has reinforced the need “to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.”

#### Democracy

What we teach:

- Britain is a democracy – this means that the people in Britain vote for the people who make the laws and decide how the country is run.

- If we didn't have a democracy, just one person might be able to make all the laws and that would not be fair.
- We encourage respect for democracy and support in the democratic processes, including respect for the law in England.
- Pupils are taught to understand how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process.
- The concept of freedom of speech and the rights and responsibilities this entails.

#### Democracy @ St Mary Magdalene:

- Members of our School Council are voted for by their class peers. Through our school council and pupil interviews Pupils have many opportunities for their voices to be heard.
- The Faith Group and Green Team are voted for by their class peers, as well. They discuss matters with their class and bring suggestions to the meetings.
- Each group shares in Collective Worship as well, and votes on important decisions for our school. This ensures that pupils' voices are heard in our school.

#### The Rule of Law

##### What we teach:

- In Britain we have a police force who make sure people do not do the wrong thing and break the law – this means that we are safe.
- Respect the basis on which the law is made and applied.
- Support for equality of opportunity for all.
- Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- Enable pupils to gain a broad general knowledge for public institutions and services in England.
- How the law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety

#### The Rule of Law @ St Mary Magdalene:

- Ethos supporting pupils to make the 'right' choices consistently reinforced throughout regular school days.
- Through our value education, the pupils are taught the reasons behind laws -that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken.
- Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate positive behaviour and attitudes to learning by our school promoting a growth mindset, rewarding positive behaviour and celebrating what they are doing well.
- We encourage intrinsic rewards, where pupils do not need to be motivated by stickers and prizes, but by a desire to make the 'right' choices.
- Our school has a good partnership with the local police and there have been occasions to bring in police to point out how a particular behaviour could be viewed by the law. We also encourage visits from and to police, fire brigade, medical centres and visits to museums in London

#### Individual Liberty

##### What we teach:

- In Britain, as long as we do not break the law, we can live as we choose to and have our own opinions about things.

- Liberty does not extend to the point of infringing on someone else's freedoms or putting their life at risk.
- The freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law.

#### Individual Liberty @ St Mary Magdalene:

- By providing safe boundaries we want pupils to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and therefore we give them many opportunities to make choices safely.
- Some examples of choices are - exercising safe choices when using computers; voting for a school council representative, choosing challenging but appropriate books to read in the reading for pleasure time; having the freedom to sign up to the extra-curricular clubs that they would like to participate in.
- Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and understand their rights.

#### Mutual Respect and Acceptance of those of different faiths and beliefs

##### What we teach:

- In Britain we respect that other people might have different beliefs than ours and they may follow different religions.
- Even if it does not match our own beliefs, we show respect for other peoples' thoughts and feelings and we can expect other people to show us respect.
- We also actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views.
- We teach pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and show how they can contribute positively to the lives of others in the local community and society more widely

#### Mutual respect @ St Mary Magdalene:

- Our school ethos is underpinned by our Christian core values, and these values determine how we live as a community at St Mary Magdalene.
- Collective Worship and RE lessons are valued opportunities to explore the meaning of our core values.
- It is also central to a positive promotion of different beliefs.

### **3. SMSC**

*I have come in order that they might have life - life in all its fullness. John 10:10*

At St Mary Magdalene's we are fully committed to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

*The Church school offers a spiritual and moral basis for the development of human wholeness and a sure foundation for personal and social values based on the person and ministry of Christ. A distinctive language is provided for understanding life and interpreting human experience. As a community of faith, the Church school should, in its best expression, reflect the nature of the Trinity, a life shared and defined by reference to others. Here we can begin to discover who we are, why we are, and – perhaps most importantly – what we might be.*

The Way Ahead, Chapter 3 para 3.26

## Spiritual Development @ St Mary Magdalene

*God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God and God lives in him. 1 John 4:16*

**As a school, our definition of spirituality is:**

***“Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions, inspiration and being aware of something ‘bigger’ outside of ourselves.”***

### A Christian perspective on spiritual development:

In the Bible, the Hebrew word ruach has a rich range of meanings: spirit; breath; wind; lifegiving. The Latin root spiritus also can be translated breath. These words contain the ideas of animation and vibrancy, the understanding of life as gift – we are ‘brought alive’ by God and invited to live that life to the full. For Christians this encompasses the whole being: mind, body and spirit. Spirituality is an integral dimension of the whole of life.

Christians believe in a God who is the source of all life, thereby placing an inherent goodness at the heart of everything. All of life is sacred, to be respected, protected and enjoyed. ‘The spiritual life,’ wrote Henri Nouwen, ‘does not remove us from the world, it leads us deeper into it.’ The Bible teaches that humanity has been made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26).

Therefore, all people are spiritual beings, with the capacity for relationship with God. This relationship is rooted in love, for ‘God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God and God lives in him.’ (1 John 4:16) It is for this reason that Augustine prayed, ‘You [God] have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in you.’

For pupils’s spirituality to develop and flourish, there must be trust; trust in a God who loves them and trust that school is a safe place where their doubts, fears and questions will be listened to.

In Collective Worship, pupils are given the opportunity to praise God for the wonders of the world, to give thanks for God’s limitless love and to learn about and celebrate the shared Christian values which unite them as a school family. The gospel stories and other Biblical teaching will therefore be seen as the root of the Christian values that shape our school’s life, values such as trust and thankfulness, compassion and forgiveness.

Opportunities for spiritual development will also be actively planned into all aspects of the curriculum. Spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy, and insight will be modeled in different ways by staff and also encouraged and celebrated in pupils. There will be a shared understanding that the spiritual life of our school is the wellspring of moral, social and cultural development and all that makes the community what it is and strives to become.

### **An Ofsted perspective on Spiritual Development**

Pupils’ spiritual development is shown by their:

- beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform spiritual development;
- perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people’s feelings and values;
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible;

- use of imagination and creativity in their learning;
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

### Aims

It is vital that all of the adults in school also see the need to develop their own spirituality for their own wellbeing, and so that they can effectively support and help our children and each other.

### Self [awe and wonder / questioning / something bigger]

- Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity

### Others [awe and wonder / questioning / something bigger]

- Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance/acceptance
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

### Transcendence (Beyond) [awe and wonder / questioning / something bigger]

- Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g. about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world

### Beauty

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life.
- Taking time for what really matters.
- Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature.

### How we aim to develop a strong sense of spirituality

- Have regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in assembly, going for a walk.
- Provide many opportunities for creativity and using the imagination
- Valuing play opportunities
- Singing often, especially with others.
- Ensuring regular time for prayer. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful, saying sorry.
- Allow children the opportunity to open themselves to God.
- Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings.
- We use the SEAL structure to support this across the school.
- Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships.
- How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental.

- Provide opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world
- Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry.
- Recognising and owning up to faults is an important healing and redemptive process.
- Encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways. (e.g.: how we treat each other every day; charitable works; looking after pets)
- Explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE programme.
- Read often to children and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts, the Bible

#### Structures to support and develop spirituality:

- Opportunities are planned across our curriculum. Spirituality is one of our 3 key themes
- Our reflective journals are used regularly as a focal point for reflection and include RE and PSHE.
- We have a planned programme for Collective Worship across the school. This maps out themes across the year, based on our school values and 'Values for Life'.
- There is a daily act of collective worship taking different forms, and involving children
- Displays and pictures around the school continually celebrate and encourage reflection and spirituality.
- Our RE curriculum is inspiring and motivating
- Visits and visitors support all our work

#### **Teaching and learning**

Through teaching and learning, our school pursues these aims by ensuring:

- the curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as forgiveness, thankfulness, peace and honesty, as documented in all school policies;
- opportunities for spiritual development will be pro-actively planned into the curriculum and actively encouraged in all areas of school life;
- Collective Worship will celebrate the love of God for every individual and provide opportunities for pupils to respond to this;
- our school building and outdoor environment will provide appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer (e.g. in the Peace Park).
- that pupils's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight will be fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies;
- that the outstanding RE curriculum will deliver knowledge and understanding about a range of faith perspectives relating to spirituality;
- that pupils will be given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected.

## Moral Development @ St Mary Magdalene

***Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.  
Be devoted to one another in love.  
Honour one another above yourselves.***

Romans 12:9-10

***And what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.***

Micah 6:8

### **A Christian perspective on moral development**

For Christians, morality is not just about good behaviour, it is about shared values that are rooted in Christian belief. Forgiveness is a central value in moral development. Christians believe that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). This means that all people do wrong things. Christians use the term 'sin' to mean both wrong things that hurt others, as well as things that hurt God. At the heart of the Christian gospel is the message that God dealt with sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is mercy and forgiveness offered to all who repent. In addition, Christians believe that the Holy Spirit works in believers to transform and renew them. Jesus taught his disciples that, as forgiven people, they should also forgive others.

Forgiveness does not mean accepting the wrong-doing or ignoring the consequences. Justice is a fundamental value, indeed pupils seem to have an innate sense of justice. However, the need for justice must be set in the context of the importance of restoring and reconciling relationships. In church schools, a balance should be forged between these. Truth and integrity are also at the heart of the Christian message. Jesus taught that He was 'truth' (John 14:6) – so honesty and truthfulness should be prominent in church school policies and practice.

These beliefs shape the values that lie at the heart of a church school and will characterise its approach to moral development. Love predominates in all aspects of school life, since it was God's act of love that brought salvation to the world. Agape is the Greek word used for God's love in the New Testament. Agape love is self-giving and costly. Christians look to the life and teaching of Jesus to help them understand what this means in practice.

### **Ofsted perspective on moral development**

Pupils' moral development is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives;
- understanding of the consequences of their actions;
- interest in investigation, and offering views about, moral and ethical issues.

### **Aims**

To foster moral development, our school aims to provide pupils with opportunities to:

- recognise the difference between right and wrong and begin to understand how Christian values inform a particular perspective on moral choices;
- understand how our moral choices can affect the lives of others;
- be able to work together to agree codes of behaviour that are appropriate for our school community;
- understand the centrality of forgiveness and reconciliation in the life and culture of our school;
- begin to engage with big questions concerning morality and ethical issues in the wider community and in the world, and to realise that each of us has a responsibility to work for justice.



## Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, our school pursues these aims by ensuring that:

- the curriculum and all areas of our community life are explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as forgiveness, compassion, and honesty, as documented in all school policies;
- opportunities for moral development will be pro-actively planned into the curriculum and actively encouraged in all areas of school life;
- our Christian values are shared with members of our school community through our website and school documentation as well as through colourful images; posters, classroom displays, screen savers and exhibitions around our school building;
- collective worship and assemblies celebrate practical demonstrations of Christian values lived out in the life of our school, local, and wider community (eg 'Star of the Week Award');
- our behaviour policy makes clear that every child is treated fairly and is always offered the opportunity for a fresh start;
- parents and carers are made aware, through our website and other documentation, of our school's expectations regarding behaviour, as well as the rewards and sanctions that we operate;
- pupils gain skills in conflict resolution through peer mediation training and problem solving strategies;
- pupils are made aware of moral and ethical issues in the national and international context through, for example, representatives from charities being invited into school to talk about their work;
- our School Council is fully involved, alongside teachers, senior leaders and governors in reviewing the impact of our Christian values on the behaviour, culture and ethos of our school.

## Social Development @ St Mary Magdalene

***The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body.  
So it is with the body of Christ.*** 1 Corinthians 12:12

### A Christian perspective on social development

Social development is about living successfully in community. For Christians, community and relationships underpin life. The Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) models a perfect community of equals, united by a bond of love. This is the same love that God has for his creation; therefore a relationship is implied. Christians claim that humans are 'made in God's image' therefore they are made for relationship. The incarnation – God becomes human in Jesus – reminds Christians that God has relationship with his creation, that he is 'involved'. This means that God understands what it means to be human.

St Paul's teaching emphasises the value of each person in the Christian community: his/her gifts, talents and worth.

Although some members of the church school may not be part of the local church community, there will nonetheless be an expectation that all relationships will be informed by Christian values. These values will be modeled by staff and governors and encouraged and celebrated in pupils. The Bible stories that underpin our school's values will be explored and creatively expressed so that they become familiar and inspirational to all.

## **Ofsted perspective on 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 socio-economic backgrounds;
- willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively;
- interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.

## **Aims**

To foster social development, our school aims to provide opportunities for pupils to:

- build relationships founded upon the Christian values (eg trust, honesty, forgiveness and compassion);
- gain a clear understanding of the place of the church school within the wider Christian community including local, national and worldwide;
- access pastoral support from school staff, local clergy and parish team members;
- be equipped to become responsible citizens who recognise the importance of service and working for the 'common good';
- feel a sense of genuine pride in our school and their membership of it.

## **Teaching and learning**

Through teaching and learning, we pursue these aims by ensuring:

- the curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as love, peace, hope and compassion, as documented in all school policies;
- opportunities for social development will be planned into the curriculum and in all areas of school life;
- Collective Worship and assemblies will celebrate and reward practical demonstrations of our Christian values such as, service to the community, and acts of friendship and generosity, particularly shown towards pupils facing difficulties or challenges;
- strong mutually supportive links will be maintained and developed with our local community through participation in charity events and acts of service;
- strong, mutually supportive links will be maintained and developed with the local and national church and the worldwide Anglican communion through regular worship in the parish church, participation in parish events,
- an appropriately trained teaching assistant will provide pastoral support to pupils or family members facing challenges;
- our school community strives to be fully inclusive (eg modifying our school building to ensure access for all);
- our School Council is trained and supported to play an active part with staff and governors in monitoring and evaluating the social cohesiveness of our school community;
- the Senior Leadership Team prioritises support and engagement with networks (eg cluster meetings, school partnerships and attending headteacher conferences)
- there is active engagement with parents and carers through the 'open door policy' and active support of Parent Councillor meetings.

## Cultural Development @ St Mary Magdalene

***After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne.***

Revelation 7: 9a

### A Christian perspective on cultural development

These words encapsulate a vision of people from many different cultural backgrounds drawn together and united in one purpose – worship. St John was given this revelation so that God's ultimate intention for humanity might be glimpsed, thus affirming all efforts to value people from different cultures.

The Christian Church was forged in a crucible of cultures. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit is described as miraculously enabling the first followers of Jesus gathered in Jerusalem to speak about the 'mighty works of God' to people from all over the ancient world, each in their own language – love. At the heart of cultural development, therefore, is the capacity, not only to understand and appreciate those elements that have shaped one's own life, but also to be open to people from very different backgrounds, and learn how to celebrate their story.

### Ofsted perspective on 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;
- willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities;
- interest in exploring, understanding and showing respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

### Aims

To foster social development, our school aims to provide pupils with opportunities to:

- gain a knowledge and understanding of the values from their own culture, heritage, traditions and an appreciation of how they have evolved and developed over time
- develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the cultures of those with whom they interact day by day, as well as other cultures represented in the UK
- develop a knowledge of the local Christian heritage, particularly through "Experience Church", visits to local churches and the Cathedral, and to explore their relationship to it.
- develop a knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of Christianity through links overseas, RE, Collective Worship and events in school
- understand the relationship between religious belief and culture through a creative, challenging and interactive RE curriculum
- explore what it means to be a child made in the image of a Creator God
- understand what it means to be part of a community characterised by openness, hospitality and an eagerness to learn from one another

### Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, we pursue our aims by ensuring:

- the curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, such as hope, compassion, and trust, as documented in all school policies;

- the curriculum will be delivered using creative and imaginative teaching strategies which allow individual gifts and talents to flourish;
- a range of art forms will be used to teach pupils about Christian heritage and tradition, and also the heritages and traditions of other faiths;
- pupils are given opportunities to take part in and respond to cultural and artistic enterprises (eg Gospel projects, and community art initiatives, as well as workshops with professional artists, filmmakers, poets, authors, dancers, etc);
- pupils explore current affairs and different interpretations of events by the media;
- pupils explore the ways in which cultural, racial, and religious prejudice can take root and learn how to recognise this and other forms of discrimination as well as ways to counter it;
- whole school projects which celebrate diversity within the local and wider community feature in our curriculum;
- links with our Diocese and dioceses overseas teach pupils that as a church school, we are a part of the World Wide Anglican Communion which comprises a rich cultural diversity of Christian traditions and practices.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SMSC @ ST MARY MAGDALENE**

SMSC is the responsibility of all staff and governors, as it will have a fundamental impact on the quality and nature of the education offered by our school.

1. The lead teacher with responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of SMSC is Paul Thomas;
2. The SMSC lead teacher will ensure that our current policy is regularly reviewed, up to date, and a true reflection of practise in this school;
3. The SMSC lead teacher has responsibility for ensuring that all staff, parents and governors understand how our school interprets SMSC and to ensure that regular, appropriate professional development is provided;
4. The SMSC lead teacher will liaise with the SLT, the Education Committee of the governing body and our school Council to monitor and evaluate the impact of opportunities for SMSC across the curriculum.

This will be achieved by:

- a. auditing curriculum policies and schemes of work to ensure that our school's values are the starting point for curriculum design;
- b. monitoring of lesson plans and the quality of teaching and learning;
- c. evaluating impact of SMSC provision through work scrutiny, reflection journals, and pupil conferencing;
- d. input at staff meetings, school governors' meetings and parents' forum to maintain the profile of SMSC in our school;
- e. sharing good practise from within our school with other schools where appropriate;