

Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development Policy

Ermine Street Church Academy

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Policy to be reviewed annually	
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Introduction

As a Church Academy and member of DEMAT, Ermine Street sees its duty to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils, including the duty to promote British Values, as an essential, intrinsic element of all aspects of its operation.

Our Christian distinctiveness, which stems from our membership of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust in partnership with the Methodist Schools Trust, means that we place equal emphasis on the development of social, spiritual and emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. Within this context, all faiths, ethnic groups and other protected characteristics (see Equality Statement) are treated equally and with respect and love. In addition, World faiths and their festivals are taught, shared and celebrated through RE sessions and Collective Worship.

Our aims 'Learn, Discover, Explore' underpin all of the work that we do at Ermine Street Church Academy not only through all the subjects of the curriculum and academic learning, but also through the ethos of the school and through the development of positive attitudes to learning, behaviour and personal growth.

Defining spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:

- Ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life;
- Ability to reflect on the beliefs, feelings and values of others;
- 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.

The moral development of pupils is shown by their:

- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, recognise legal boundaries and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues and ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues

The social development of pupils is shown by their:

- Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, for example working and socialising with other pupils, including those from different genders, ages, religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds;
- Willingness to participate and serve in a variety of communities and social settings;
- 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; they develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

The cultural development of pupils is shown by their:

- Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and those 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, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities;
- The extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different genders, ages and religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Principles

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development is crucial for individual pupils and important for society as a whole. It is the heart of what education is all about – helping pupils grow and develop as people and effective participants in modern Britain.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development is cross curricular and goes beyond the subject-based curriculum of the school day. It puts the child at the centre of all we do.

It is an expectation that all staff, in all subjects, can and should make a contribution to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of pupils through the curriculum, through the use of appropriate teaching and learning strategies and through their own conduct.

The importance of relationships between all school staff, parents and governors is vital. These relationships will be characterised by mutual respect, by positive attitudes, by the willingness to listen and be listened to and by the valuing of all pupils.

Spiritual Development In Practice

This relates to the quest for individual identity and the search for meaning and purpose in our existence. It leads towards the understanding of self and others. It has to do with feelings, emotions, attitudes and beliefs. It is not linked solely to a particular doctrine or faith and spiritual development is therefore accessible to everyone.

Children are given opportunities to reflect upon the meaning of spiritual experiences. Examples of experiences commonly regarded as spiritual include:

- Curiosity and questions
- Awe and wonder
- Connection and belonging
- Heightened self-awareness
- Prayer and worship
- Deep feelings of what is felt to be ultimately important
- A sense of security, well-being, worth and purposefulness

Our school supports children's spiritual development by:

- Giving children the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they impact on peoples' lives;
- Giving children the opportunity to reflect on Bible stories, stories from other World faiths, examples of good deeds, models provided by other people, all through daily Collective Worship;
- Encouraging children to explore and develop what animates themselves and others;
- Giving children the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they impact on people and how an understanding of them can be helpful;
- Developing a climate or ethos within which all children can grow and flourish, enjoying individual liberty and mutual respect;
- Welcoming difference and respecting the integrity of individuals, including full acceptance of those with different faiths and beliefs;

- Promoting learning opportunities which value children's questions, encourage deeper questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.

Moral Development In Practice

Children are encouraged to understand the need for a common code based on The Ermine Street Ethos. At Ermine Street Church Academy the Ethos is our moral compass and helps all children to understand what is right and wrong. From this basis they develop the ability to make judgements and to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and the positive and negative consequences of them.

Our school supports children's moral development by:

- Providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour (The Ermine Street Ethos) which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school;
- Promoting racial, religious and all other forms of equality;
- 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;
- 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;
- Providing models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts and Collective Worship; reinforcing the school's values through images, posters, classroom displays, etc.

Social Development In Practice

This enables pupils to become conscientious participants in their family, class, school, the local and wider community and make a positive contribution to the lives of others in society. Within this there should be a balance of the positive, satisfying elements of belonging to a group or society along with the demands, obligations and cooperation such membership requires.

Our school supports children's social development by:

- Identifying key values and principles on which school and community life is based. These are expressed within the Ermine Street Ethos;
- Fostering a sense of community, with common, inclusive values;
- Promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality;
- Encouraging pupils to work co-operatively;
- Encouraging pupils to recognise and respect social differences and similarities;
- Providing positive experiences to reinforce our values as a school community –for example, through Collective Worship, team building activities, residential experiences, school productions;
- Helping pupils develop personal qualities, which are valued in a civilised society, for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, interdependence, self-respect and awareness of others' needs;

- Providing opportunities for engaging in the democratic process and participating in community life;
- Providing opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility;
- Providing positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community.

Cultural Development In Practice

At the heart of cultural development lies the necessity to develop a sense of personal identity, whilst at the same time acquiring awareness, understanding and tolerance regarding the cultural traditions and beliefs of others.

Our school supports children's cultural development by:

- Extending pupils' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language;
- Encouraging them to think about special events in life and how they are celebrated;
- Recognising and nurturing particular gifts and talents; providing opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encouraging pupils to reflect on their significance;
- Reinforcing the school's cultural links through displays, events, etc.;
- Developing partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend pupils' cultural awareness, for example, theatre, museum and gallery visits.