



Ireby Church of England Primary School

Vision – ‘Created to do good’ – Ephesians 2:10

Personal Development Policy

Approved by: ¹

Michael John
Head Teacher:

Date: 29/09/2026

Philippa Irving
Chair of Governor:

Date: 29/09/2026

Next review date: ² September 2028

¹ This policy requires approval from the Full Governing Body.

² This document must be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation/statutory guidance changes.
This policy will be published on the school website.

Our school's Christian vision

Our Christian vision has its roots in the book of Ephesians with 'Created to do Good' at its heart – for 'God calls us His workmanship or His artwork. We are something crafted, with skill and a purpose, by God.'

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul explores God's plan to bring all of creation together as a loving family to use their unique talents and passions to serve and love one another. We learn how God teaches us to live our lives, how to grow relationships, accept others and use the words and example of Jesus as a foundation for all our learning. **'We are one big family, made up of lots of different people.'**

In-line with our role as a Church of England school, to serve the local community and provide an education for children of all backgrounds, including those of different faiths or no faith, our Christian vision is for our whole community and enables us to:

Grow a strong and loving community: 'one big family,' using our unique talents and passions to serve and love one another.

Support our children's academic, social and spiritual development: through a rich curriculum where all can flourish.

Teach our children dignity and respect: through experiencing our world, meeting people, learning from them and participating positively in our communities.

Educate resilience through: embracing challenge, solving problems, learning from mistakes and supporting the process of learning.

Give our children an appreciation of their beautiful locality: and how they can play a role in preserving it for generations to come.

Develop our children's understanding of technology: and learn how it can be used responsibly to enhance our world.

Our Christian vision is in-line with Ofsted's recommendations that there are 6 strands of Personal Development that we at Ireby School aim to promote:

- developing responsible, respectful and active citizens;
- promoting equality of opportunity;
- promoting an inclusive environment;
- developing children's character, giving them qualities they need to flourish in society;
- developing children's confidence and resilience so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy;
- preparing children for the next phase of education.

Every subject area identifies how it will support our children's personal development with focus on SMSC, British Values and Cultural Capital.

SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) Development

Our curriculum supports SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) development by encouraging children to:

- Our [Spiritual development policy](#) asks us to think about mirrors, windows and doors.
 - **Windows:** We give our childrens opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways. Learning about life in all its fullness. This includes both the things that amaze them and also challenge them.
 - **Mirrors:** Giving our childrens opportunities to reflect upon their experiences. To meditate on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. Learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.
 - **Doors:** By giving our childrens opportunities to respond, to do something creative in order to express, apply and further develop their thoughts and convictions. Learning to live by putting into action their beliefs and values.

- At every opportunity, we take time to stop and to connect with the world around us, to wonder at creation and think about the questions we have. Whether it is a geography field trip to the lakes, rivers and mountains, learning to appreciate through photography or visiting places of worship in cities and towns. We take time to connect, to learn from the experience and from people.

British Values

Lessons promote British values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance) by incorporating activities that encourage debate, respect for differing opinions and an understanding of societal structures.

Cultural capital

Ofsted defines cultural capital as the essential knowledge and experiences that children need to succeed in education and life, emphasising schools' role in providing access to enriching opportunities. Our curriculum broadens children's experiences through experiencing our world, meeting people, learning from them and participating positively in our communities.

Our curriculum helps children appreciate cultural diversity, develop global awareness and communicate with confidence in an increasingly connected society.

Intent:

How we support our children to develop into responsible, respectful adults and active citizens:

Christian vision: 'Support our children's academic, social and spiritual development: through a rich curriculum where all can flourish.'

Teach our children dignity and respect: through experiencing our world, meeting people, learning from them and participating positively in our communities.'

This is what you will see happening at Ireby to support the above – we discuss these actions with our children in the context of developing their responsibility and respect:

- **School responsibilities:** Across our school we encourage our children to grow their understanding of responsibility. Attending and being ready for school – seeing it as an important commitment in their lives. Daily class routines of organising work equipment, keeping their workspace tidy. Children take on roles of librarians, playground helpers, supporting our younger children, organising equipment and taking responsibility for all aspects of school life. Staff help our children understand that all these things help our children grow their understanding of 'responsibility'.
- **Democracy:** Children and teachers have daily discussions with their class about issues that arise in and around the school. The children contribute their ideas to school decisions and understanding why we have rules and laws and relate these to their understanding of 'rule of law'. Children also gather other children's views on our school on issues such as behaviour, curriculum and inclusion and report directly to our staff and governors at our weekly staff meetings and regular governors' meetings. They have a real voice in our school.
- **Respect for others:** Throughout our curriculum, we learn about different religions, cultures, families and beliefs; children will visit mosques, Hindu Temples, Gurdwaras, cities and meet and learn from many people – it is threaded throughout our curriculum (see our Personal development opportunity board and Facebook page). Children are taught to listen respectfully when others have different opinions – and to respond accordingly; challenging any discriminatory language or stereotyping.
- **Helping the community:** Community is at the heart of our Christian vision – to '*Grow a strong and loving community: 'one big family,' using our unique talents and passions to serve and love one another.*' Children and families grow strong relationships with staff. We grow vegetables in our community garden and ensure that any surplus is distributed amongst residents of Ireby. We hold charity fundraising events, food-bank collections at Harvest time, have litter picks on beaches, support local events such as the Heskett Show and foster links with elderly residents who visit our history lessons or community groups who support our curriculum.
- **Environmental responsibility:** Children are involved with the Skiddaw tree project – and work with community groups to grow and plant new trees across Skiddaw – which in turn helps a range of vulnerable people in our communities. Our children recycle, reducing waste, looking after the school grounds, garden and through our geography and PSHE curriculum, understanding climate and environmental issues.
- **Taking action:** Children listen to the views of other children, write a report with recommendations and present this report directly to governors at governor meetings.

- **Understanding rights and responsibilities:** learning that they have rights but also responsibilities towards other people; understanding fairness, consequences and how their behaviour affects others.
- **Active citizenship through the curriculum:** debating an issue, writing persuasive letters about a local concern, learning about Parliament/local government and discuss topical, ethical or environmental issues such as our Year 5 and 6 geography which conducted an in-depth study on the proposal to remove a weir at a local lake, Crummock Water, and dropping the water level by 1.5 meters.
- **Respectful relationships:** Our children learn how to cooperate with others, resolve any disagreements appropriately and show empathy towards each other, taking turns, listening and being willing to compromise when required. They listen to other children's point of view and present these views at governors' meetings.
- **Leadership and service:** Children across our school show examples of leadership, and our value of service. Children show leadership by representing the views of others at governor meetings. Older children supporting younger children, children lead Collective Worship and represent the school at events – such as the orchestra day. Children also take responsibility for visitors and ensure they are welcome at our school.

How we promote equality of opportunity

At Ireby, we 'serve our local community and provide an education for children of all backgrounds, including those of different faiths or no faith, our Christian vision is for our whole community.' We ensure that all children are part of our community by:

- **Removing financial barriers** – every child will have equal access to opportunities by helping with the cost of residential, trips, clubs, music tuition, uniform or equipment so that no children are excluded.
- **Supporting disadvantaged children academically** – through our rigorous assessment, identifying gaps quickly in our EYFS and providing appropriate teaching, intervention or additional support.
- **SEND inclusion** – adapting teaching, resources, activities and visits so children with SEND can participate meaningfully alongside their peers.
- **Equal access to enrichment** – ensuring that all our children have access to our rich curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, ensuring participation in sports, performances, residential and other activities and taking action to ensure that all children participate. (See Personal Development opportunities document)
- **High expectations for everyone** – our entire curriculum sets high expectations in every subject, and our rigorous assessment and support ensures that we identify any individual at risk of not achieving the expected standards.
- **Fair access to responsibility** – We ensure that all opportunities such as school council, school playground monitors, sports leaders, public and curriculum performances and other positions of responsibility are accessible to all children.
- **Challenging stereotypes** – for example, ensuring boys and girls see that subjects, careers, sports and responsibilities are open to everyone and recording and acting on any stereotyping we see in action.
- **Representation in the curriculum** – children encounter people from different cultures, ethnicities, religions, disabilities, families and backgrounds through books, history, RE, PSHE and the wider curriculum.
- **Supporting children's experiencing barriers** – recognising where attendance, family circumstances, emotional needs, disadvantage or other factors are affecting a children's participation and putting appropriate support in place.
- **Preventing discrimination** – teaching children about *protected characteristics* at an age-appropriate level and making clear that discriminatory language or behaviour is unacceptable.
- **Broadening horizons** – giving children experiences they might not otherwise encounter, such as visits, visitors, cultural experiences, sport, music, outdoor education and encounters with different careers. Our amazing document 'Personal Development opportunities across our curriculum' highlights how we achieve this.

How we promote an inclusive environment

Our curriculum has been designed to represent a range of cultures and races. Where appropriate, colonial choices and their impact on a range of issues are explored. Our curriculum's visual representation is inclusive and representative of a variety of people and places, challenging stereotypes or historical ideologies. Within sensitive units, questions have been included to support children's lived experiences and backgrounds. Resources and case studies are carefully considered to encourage the children to think about their role in

society and to respect the many ways in which people's lives have been influenced. Our curriculum supports children in appreciating the complexity of people's lives, the diversity of societies and the relationships between different groups.

Developing Inclusive classrooms

At Ireby we develop inclusion through every curriculum subject area and through every lesson we teach. We use a range of strategies to support inclusion. We also ensure that our children understand why we use these strategies – and how they ensure that all children are included in our learning.

Quality questions

A great question makes our children think and challenges their mind. But often children, like most people, need time to think and process their thoughts before they can offer a quality answer. At Ireby, we recognise this and give our children time – if a question is worth asking – we want to explore the very best quality answers.

Shared discussions/ team and partnership work

We create classroom partnerships so that children can discuss and articulate their ideas share responses with their peers. We will often model how these partnerships work successfully so that there are equal opportunities. Learning how to listen with attention is a vital part of this process. The teachers will spend their time listening to the quality and equality of discussions (ensuring all are involved) – making sure good examples are shared with the class and making interventions only if they lead to improved learning outcomes.

Feedback from children

Children give feedback through a range of medium. We utilise whiteboards, especially in maths, for children to take their time and demonstrate their thinking. We also utilise technology. Throughout our curriculum children use Microsoft Teams to share ideas. We often work collaboratively on a question and children contribute through a shared document which is visible to all. This allows teachers to give immediate feedback and model improvements in the moment.

During feedback, teachers will select pairs or individuals and ensure that all children have the opportunity to speak. We know our children – we know who would be quiet – who would be lay low and let others dominate. By gentle encouragement and through rehearsing thoughtful answers and possible teacher intervention – we give all our children the opportunity to be part of their lesson – equal opportunities – for all.

'Hands-up' is no longer useful to us an inclusive tool as we recognise that it promotes inequality through those who dominate through language and confidence.

No Hands up

Asking children to respond to 'hands up' is a common part of schools' teaching but at Ireby, we recognise that this can cut down opportunities for learning and talk.

At Ireby we therefore don't favour a hand's up approach to answering questions as we understand that children from families who are accustomed to talking already have the confidence and oral skills to grasp opportunities to speak and will engage themselves readily in questions and answers. Other children, however, might hold back from responding, including shy ones, those who are new to learning English and those whose oral skills are less well developed. As a result, the language gap widens further.

If six children raise their hands and only one is chosen to answer, the other five are excluded, even if they had something worthwhile to say, whilst other children may stay silent altogether.

Calm learning environments

When children are learning to read and write, a noisy environment, where other activities are taking place at the same time, makes it difficult for them to hear what the teacher and other children are saying, particularly for those who have hearing difficulties or impairments, those with speech, language and communication needs and those who find it difficult to pay attention.

If these children cannot hear clearly, it limits their opportunity to think clearly and therefore their chances of responding are immediately limited.

Teachers and staff play a vital role in creating calm learning environments. We aim for teacher's voices to be at a conversational level – even using whispering to create calm - as children tend to mirror back the behaviours of the adults in the room.

Calm, quiet classrooms give them the best chance to interact and make progress in reading, writing and across our curriculum.

To importance of listening attentively

When listening to feedback from pairs or individuals our staff listen attentively. We listen for specific vocabulary and opportunities to model or probe for higher-quality responses – for learning opportunities or to praise high-quality and share it with the class.

We might take something that was said and ask them to reframe their response, or reframe it for them by modelling. We might ask others to contribute their ideas for improvement, being careful to foster a culture where feedback accepted as learning. Teachers work hard to ensure all are included.

Developing character, giving our children the qualities they need to flourish in society

Our Christian vision: 'Educate resilience through: embracing challenge, solving problems, learning from mistakes and supporting the process of learning'

Resilience and perseverance – throughout their lessons, teachers encourage children not to give up when work is difficult; learning from mistakes; completing challenging tasks; taking part in competitive sport. We also learn about this through collective worship, and our Bible stories such as Ruth and Joshua.

Confidence and self-esteem – presenting to governors at governor meetings, presenting collective worship, saying prayer at lunchtime, public performance at our annual festivals; speaking to an audience; representing the school at sports and musical events; sharing ideas in class and taking part in class discussions.

Independence – organising their own equipment, managing homework, making appropriate choices, taking increasing responsibility as they get older.

Leadership – school council representatives, sports leaders, playground buddies, house captains, librarians or older children supporting younger children – often highly visible on our playground.

Teamwork and cooperation – working collaboratively in lessons, team sports, performances, residential visits to cities such as London and Edinburgh. Group challenges – outdoor learning – bushcraft, raft building, kayaking and team-building exercises.

Empathy and kindness – recognising when someone needs help, supporting other children, welcoming new children (children new to our school settle quickly) and understanding other people's feelings and circumstances.

Responsibility – carrying out classroom and whole-school jobs, caring for equipment, looking after the environment and understanding that actions have consequences.

Respect and tolerance – encountering different religions, cultures, beliefs and family structures and learning to disagree respectfully. We meet people across our curriculum and listen to many different worldviews.

Courage and willingness to try new things – residential visits, outdoor activities – jumping into waterfalls! Performing and music, competitions, trying unfamiliar activities and taking appropriate risks. (See our personal development opportunities)

Self-discipline and self-regulation – managing emotions, resolving disagreements, following agreed expectations and understanding how behaviour affects others.

Curiosity – asking questions, investigating ideas, exploring interests beyond the immediate curriculum and being willing to consider different viewpoints.

Moral character and integrity – honesty, fairness, keeping promises, admitting mistakes and understanding why doing the right thing matters.

Service to others – fundraising, supporting charities, helping within the local community and older children helping younger children, gardening and giving our produce to the community, supporting the Skiddaw project.

How we develop children's confidence and resilience so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy

At Ireby a rich and diverse curriculum supports our children to understand themselves and connect with

their spirituality through:

Teaching children to recognise emotions – helping children identify feelings such as worry, anger, sadness, frustration and anxiety and understand that these emotions are normal. This is through our PSHE, RE and computing curriculums and through our daily interactions through every part of the school day.

Teaching coping strategies – breathing techniques, calming strategies, taking time out appropriately, talking to someone, physical activity, mindfulness or breaking a problem into manageable steps. These strategies can be taught to groups or individuals and recognized in individual support plans.

Knowing when and how to ask for help – children know which trusted adults they can approach and understand that seeking help is a positive action.

Developing resilience through learning – encouraging children to persevere when work is difficult, learn from mistakes and understand that getting something wrong is part of learning.

Building confidence – opportunities to speak in collective worship, perform, participate in church festivals, compete in sporting events, try different sports, represent children at governor meetings, canvass the views of the public through geography fieldtrips or take on responsibilities across our school, leading lunchtime prayer.

Developing independence – gradually giving children greater responsibility for their learning, belongings, decisions and behaviour.

Dealing with setbacks – teaching children how to respond appropriately when they lose a game, receive constructive feedback, fall out with a friend or do not achieve something first time. Staff will often ask children to reflect on the nature of 'created to do good.'

Understanding healthy lifestyles – teaching the connection between sleep, exercise, diet, friendships, screen use and emotional wellbeing all taught through a comprehensive PSHE and RSE curriculum.

Friendship and relationship skills – friendship is one of our Christian values - through our collective worship, PSHE curriculum and daily interactions we look to help children to resolve disagreements, communicate feelings, recognise healthy/unhealthy relationships and seek support when relationships are causing distress. We learn through Bible stories and rich classroom discussions.

Providing opportunities for challenge – residential visits, outdoor education, performances, competitions and unfamiliar activities where children learn that they can cope with new or difficult situations.

PSHE/RSHE teaching about mental wellbeing – explicitly teaching that mental health, like physical health, can change and that people sometimes need help and how to ask for it.

Pastoral support when needed – providing additional support for individual children experiencing bereavement, family difficulties, friendship problems, anxiety or other challenges, while escalating concerns appropriately where necessary. We have trained children's mental health staff and an experienced SENDCo with excellent external connections.

How we prepare children for the next phase of education

At each transition, our children are supported to take the next step by:

Secure curriculum foundations – ensuring children develop the reading, writing, mathematics and wider curriculum knowledge they will need for future learning.

Identifying and addressing gaps – rigorous assessment is used to identify children who are at risk of not achieving national expectations, with support provided so gaps do not become barriers at the next stage.

Developing independence – children increasingly organise themselves, manage equipment, complete tasks independently and take responsibility for their learning.

Study and learning habits – our curriculum, teaching and learning policy is clear about how we develop and extend children's ability to concentrate, persevere, respond to feedback, edit and improve their work and seek help appropriately as the curriculum becomes increasingly challenging. The spiral nature of our curriculum design ensures that we build skills and knowledge over time.

Transition between year groups – teachers share relevant academic, SEND, safeguarding and pastoral information so that the receiving teacher understands children's needs. As a small school we also discuss pupils' needs at weekly staff meetings and at half-term Pupil Achievement Meetings.

EYFS to Year 1 transition – helping children gradually become familiar with Year 1 expectations while ensuring transition is appropriate to their developmental needs.

Preparing Year 6 for secondary school – transition visits, meeting secondary staff, discussing timetables, homework, travelling to school, organisation and the differences children may encounter.

Additional transition for vulnerable children – extra visits, photographs of the new setting, meetings with secondary SEND/pastoral staff or individual transition plans for children who need additional support.

Building confidence and resilience – giving children opportunities to encounter challenge, solve problems, cope with setbacks and become comfortable with unfamiliar situations throughout our curriculum.

Social skills – teaching children to meet and work with different people, form positive relationships, resolve disagreements and communicate appropriately – see our Personal Development opportunities document.

Personal organisation – particularly with older children, encouraging responsibility for PE kits, homework, reading books, equipment and deadlines rather than relying entirely on adults. Children also start to walk into school without an adult from Key stage 1.

Online safety and personal safety – preparing older children for greater independence, including safe use of technology, social media awareness and knowing how to seek help. Our computing and PSHE curriculum have a particular focus on this area.

Understanding future opportunities – encounters with different jobs and careers at a local feeder schools, visitors to school, community links and challenging stereotypes about what children might achieve.

Children voice about transition – discussing children's concerns about moving classes or schools and helping them develop strategies for managing those concerns and reporting these at governor meetings during the summer term.

Working with parents – providing information about transition and helping families understand how they can support increasing independence.

IMPACT

Overall impact of our work on Personal Development:

What you will observe and outcomes children present:

Area	Outcome
Confidence	Children will willingly speak in collective worship, performances, class discussions and to visitors.
Resilience	Children persevere with difficult work, accept mistakes and respond positively to feedback.
Independence	Children will organise themselves, manage equipment and increasingly solve problems without immediately relying on adults.

Area	Outcome
Leadership	Children will successfully carry out roles such as school councillor, presenting to our governing body, looking after younger children, monitor, sports leader or librarian.
Responsibility	Children look after resources, younger pupils and their environment and understand the consequences of their actions. You will hear and see children taking responsibility for leading prayer at lunchtimes.
Respect	Children listen to different viewpoints, behave respectfully and understand that people have different beliefs, backgrounds and families. You will hear children using their manners and saying 'please' and 'thank you'.
Equality & diversity	Children understand age-appropriate protected characteristics and know that discrimination is unacceptable.
Relationships	Children form positive friendships, cooperate effectively and increasingly resolve minor disagreements appropriately.
Mental wellbeing	Children can identify emotions, explain strategies for dealing with worries and identify trusted adults they can approach and ask for help.
Physical wellbeing	Children understand the importance of exercise, sleep, diet and healthy choices and can explain why they are important.
Keeping safe	Children know how to respond to unsafe situations and who to tell when something concerns them.
Online safety	Children recognise common online risks and know what to do if something online worries or upsets them.
Citizenship	Children participate in school decisions, understand democracy at an age-appropriate level and contribute to their school/community.
Community involvement	Children participate in community events, charity activities, environmental projects or activities supporting others.
Cultural development	Children experience music, art, literature, performances, visits and experiences beyond their everyday lives and can talk about them.
Wider opportunities	Children, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, participate in clubs, trips, residential, sport and all curriculum enrichment.
Character	Children demonstrate qualities such as kindness, honesty, perseverance, empathy and responsibility in everyday situations.
Preparation for next stage	Older children become increasingly organised, confident and independent and can explain how they are being prepared for secondary school.
Pupil voice	Children believe their views matter and can give examples of changes or decisions they have influenced.
Behaviour	Pupils understand expectations and generally demonstrate self-control and consideration for others without constant adult direction.
Spirituality	Children can explain how they develop their spirituality – they may speak about windows, mirrors and doors.
British Values	Children can explain British Values, Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect & Tolerance Individual Liberty and give examples of how they relate to their experience.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

- The governing board will approve the Personal Development policy and support the Head teacher in reviewing its impact.
- Will monitor the impact of our policy by listening to the views of our children and reviewing and reporting outcomes with the Head teacher and staff.

The Head teacher and staff

- The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Personal Development Lead are responsible for ensuring

that the Personal Development curriculum is taught through the relevant subjects and experiences consistently across the school.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Understand their role in supporting our children's personal development.
- Providing a safe and supportive environment where children can develop their confidence to ask questions, challenge information they are offered, draw on their own experiences, express their views and opinions and put what they have learned into practice in their own lives.
- Delivering relevant subjects in an inclusive environment.
- Modelling positive attitudes at all times.
- Responding to and being sensitive to the needs of individual children as some may have direct experience of some of the issues.

Links to other policies

Personal Development is at the heart of our school as it encourages, promotes and embeds a range of skills that allow children to be life-long learners. The policy overarches and is closely related to other key policies that we have in place at Ireby Primary School:

- Curriculum, teaching and learning policy
- PSHE/RSHE Policy
- RE Policy
- Spirituality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND policy