



St. Margaret's C of E Primary and Nursery School

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

Written: September 2023

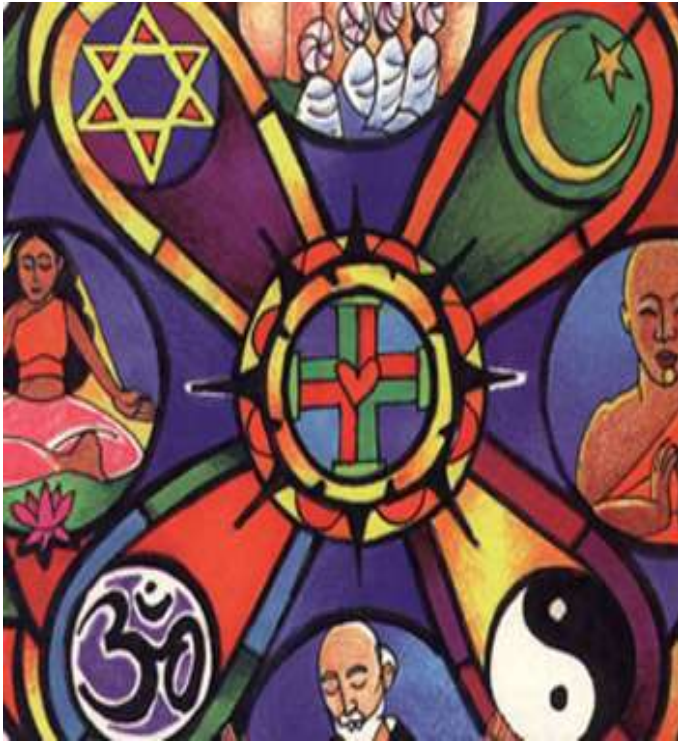
Date for review: September 2026

Head Teacher's signature

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Chair of Governor's signature

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*"As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples."
John 13.34-35*

Introduction

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of the child is recognised as being of fundamental importance for the education of all children by Governors, staff and parents at our

school. We understand that the importance of the SMSC development of the children in our care to assist with relationships with other people and, for believers, with God. We believe the SMSC growth within a child will help them search for individual identity and help with responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. Through our SMSC policy, we endeavour to help children to search for meanings and purposes in life and for values by which to live.

St Margaret's school promotes a Christian ethos, by example and by direct teaching. The school follows and promotes the teachings of Jesus. Our Christian values encourage care for all, mutual respect, responsibility and strong partnerships between school, home and Church. We recognise that spiritual development is not limited to religious beliefs and knowledge but includes a much wider spectrum. It is supported in all areas of learning and can contribute to the child's motivation to learn. It is recognised that such development will be most successful when the values and attitudes promoted by the staff provide a model of behaviour for the children. The quality of relationships and the atmosphere within the school are reflected in an appreciation of these shared values. We believe we are role models for the children in our care.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies on Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Collective Worship and RE.

Aims

We therefore seek to provide an education which provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures. We endeavour to teach children to respect the world they live in and deal with everyday life situations in a confident and understanding way. The SMSC policy is integral

to all areas of teaching and learning as it infiltrates the whole curriculum, however, at St Margaret's SMSC is seen most clearly in the distinctive teaching of RE and PSHCE. We also believe it is especially important in a Church School to develop a strong sense of caring for the whole school family and community so that each person feels valued as an individual.

We aim to provide a firm foundation of strong Christian values to prepare children for the society in which they live. This is embodied in St Margaret's vision:

"St Margaret's is a welcoming church school where we learn how to love God, one another and ourselves.

We foster a Christian ethos and develop positive relationships with our church, Ifield and the wider community.

We provide the highest quality of teaching and learning. We challenge pupils to meet their full potential academically, spiritually and socially."

It is important that the school works in close partnership with parents to share the values we uphold whilst respecting that families may not share, nor wish to share, the values imposed by the ethos of the school. However, it is expected that on the whole, parents will support our principles and policies.

Our aims are to foster SMSC development through:

- Making a contribution for a child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through collective worship.
- Ensuring all curriculum areas make a contribution to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities and this will be planned for in each area of the curriculum.
- Contribute in the general life of the school on a daily basis by finding appropriate opportunities for children's SMSC development by exploring various teaching and learning strategies e.g. through discussion, reflection, taking part in prayers as a whole school and in class, and the use of circle times at any given opportunity.
- Respect the integrity and spirituality of pupils from other faith backgrounds. The diversity of spiritual traditions will be recognised, and pupils will be given access to alternative views.
- All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals and showing respect for pupils and their families.
- The school community will be a place where pupils can find acceptance for themselves as unique individuals, and where forgiveness and the opportunity to start again is fundamental to the ethos of the school.
- Helping pupils learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others.
- Teaching children to understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.
- Giving each pupil the opportunity to explore social and moral issues, and develop a

sense of social and moral responsibility.

Spiritual Development

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful.
Psalm 139.13-14

We endeavour to achieve a spiritual development by enriching and encouraging the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Explore their relationship with God and the sense that they are His children, unique and loved by Him;
- Explore and experience prayer and worship from a variety of Christian traditions;
- Give thanks to God for all aspects of school life;
- Discuss and reflect upon key questions of meaning and truth such as the existence of God, the origins and purpose of the universe, good and evil, life after death; much of the above stated points make up a significant part of the school RE syllabus.
- Discover how the creative and expressive arts enable spiritual development;
- Give opportunities to discuss feelings and emotions openly;
- Recognise and encourage the use of personal and group gifts and talents;
- Give opportunities to develop their gift of imagination and creativity;
- Encourage curiosity and questioning so that their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues can be developed within a secure environment where faith is valued;
- Develop a sense of personal significance and belonging;
- Give opportunities to experience moments of stillness and reflection

Moral Development

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.
Romans 12.2

Moral development relates to children's knowledge, understanding, attitudes and behaviour to what is acceptable and to know the difference between right and wrong. Moral development at St Margaret's is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Provide consistent guidance throughout by developing a sense of right and wrong based on the teaching of Jesus Christ.
- Recognise the values identified within the Bible such as truth, justice, trust, love, peace, compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation and redemption through a systematic teaching of the Christian values.
- Recognise the unique value of each individual.
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others to value the contribution of adults in school who advise, guide and befriend both children and parents.

- Gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes.
- Take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others.
- Show respect for the environment.
- Make informed and independent judgments.
- Take opportunities to discuss moral issues across the whole curriculum.
- Allow the children to raise issues and play a part in development and change through their active involvement in the School Council
- Reward good behaviour through stickers and certificates and the Christian Value Book and photographs on the Christian Value tree
- Take responsibility for ones' own actions
- Understanding the consequences of actions for self and others

Social Development

As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.

John 13.34-35

Social Development relates to children acquiring an understanding of the rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global). Also, it's an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good. At St Margaret's we aspire to develop pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice.

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Begin to understand the Christian imperative for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged.
- Build relationships within the school and between the school, the parish and the local community
- Consider how Christian beliefs affect decisions at local and national level
- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- Develop an understanding of how curriculum learning relates to life in society
- Take on the roles of team leader and team worker
- To articulate their own views on a range of current issues through platforms such as the School Council.
- Demonstrate respect for the opinions of others and a willingness to learn from their insight
- Impart knowledge of ways in which societies function and are organised – from the family to the school, from local to national to international.
- Help recognise and accept differences in human beings.
- Resolve conflict in a peaceful way.
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Value and support human rights and justice at every level.
- Develop the skills of listening, discussing and debating.
- Become aware of the presence of bias, prejudice, and discrimination and stereotyping.

Cultural Development

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3.28

We aim to promote cultural development by providing opportunities for the children to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

They will learn to respect their own culture and that of others, to develop an interest in others ways of doing things and curiosity about differences.

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Promote an understanding of Christianity from a global perspective through encounters with people, literature and the creative arts from different cultures.
- Recognise Christianity as a world faith.
- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence individuals and society.
- Teach the children about their own cultural identity, to value their traditions, culture and history.
- Develop an understanding of the children's local social and cultural environment.
- Teach the children about other cultures and other parts of the world, and to encourage them to learn from other societies.
- Explore issues such as human rights, discrimination, prejudice and bias and how they might be overcome.
- Think about the basic similarities we have as members of the human race, rather than the cultural differences that exist.
- Teach the children and challenge their views and opinions by inviting visitors from different cultures and traditions into school.
- Value the rich diversity of mankind.
- Develop and strengthen cultural interests.
- Consider the relationship between British and European culture and Christianity

Whole School Opportunities

Incidental discussions with children will allow them:

- To distinguish between right and wrong.
- To articulate their own attitudes and values.
- To take responsibilities for their own actions.
- Talk about personal experiences and feelings.
- Express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs.
- Speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying, death etc.
- Share thoughts and feelings with other people.
- Explore relationships with friends/family/others.
- Consider others' needs and behaviour.

- Show empathy.
- Develop self-esteem and a respect for others.
- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Develop the skills and attitudes that enable pupils to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally — e.g. empathy, respect, open mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness.

Classroom Opportunities

Development in SMSC will take place across all curriculum areas, within activities that encourage pupils to recognise the spiritual dimension of their learning, reflect on the significance of what they are learning, and to recognise any challenges that there may be to their own attitude and lifestyle.

Pupils are encouraged to question, investigate and discuss from an early age. The main curriculum is taught through a half termly topic, which enables the pupils to explore their knowledge and faith in a wider sense e.g. a topic on growth challenges the children to look at the wonders of creation and a topic on ourselves gives children the opportunity to look at relationships. Specific areas covered by curriculum subjects are listed in the appendix. (1)

Collective Worship

Daily worship is vital in the promotion of SMSC issues in school. Daily collective worship is an important part of the day for a Church school for it sets into context the whole ethos of the school of a caring Christian environment where all are valued. It is not simply a coming together as a school but also an opportunity for all to share their beliefs.

St. Margaret's CE Primary School holds a collective gathering every day supporting the school's Christian ethos: four days involving acts of specific collective worship and one day when we celebrate the achievements of our school and the individuals within it. Visitors are invited to attend and lead our worships as appropriate. These may sometimes take place in St Margaret's Church and include parents and relatives of pupils at our school. (Please see separate Collective Worship policy for further details)

Church Links

Each week one of the clergy from St Margaret's Church attends to take collective worship. Occasionally other clergy also attend from other churches and denominations.

Links with the wider community

Visitors are welcomed into school.

Links with the Church are fostered through links with the local churches and the Diocesan Board of Education.

The development of a strong home-school link is regarded as very important, enabling parents and teachers to work in an effective partnership to support the pupil.

Pupils will be taught to appreciate their local environment and to develop a sense of responsibility to it.

Equal Opportunities

At St Margaret's School we believe every child should have the opportunity to experience success, fulfilment and happiness in their daily lives. We aim to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils in SMSC teaching and we recognise individual pupil's learning needs.

Assessment

An ongoing assessment of the Spiritual Moral and Social Development of a child will initially be the responsibility of the class teacher and thereafter by any member of staff who comes into regular contact with the child.

The Role of all Teachers and Adults at St Margaret's School

- Be aware of these responsibilities detailed in the SMSC policy
- Know how respective curriculum areas might be used
- Plan accordingly
- Over each key stage, teachers should plan a balance between spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects.
- Be alert to the many every day, unplanned and incidental opportunities that can provide important starting points
- Give opportunities for grace and prayer in class on a daily basis

Appendix

1.

English

- The studying of different texts – classical, contemporary, serious, funny can provide challenging starting points and give an appreciation of the beauty of great language and literature.
- Exposure to great literature and poetry and its place within a culture – appreciating moral or social aspects.
- Drama and stories which create opportunities for moral judgements.
- Shared activities – shared reading, group drama, corporate writing that lead to an understanding of an appreciation of the importance of the group and other people's point of view.
- Knowledge of our language and its influence on our culture and the importance and value of other languages and cultures.
- Awareness of traditional tales and their cultural background.

Maths

- Group work on a shared topic or investigation promoting an appreciation of the input of all members of the group.
- An appreciation of the inherent pattern and beauty of mathematics.
- Studying the patterns of Islam and their cultural/religious connections.
- The promotion of positive attitudes towards mathematics through appropriate groupings.

I.T.

- Working together to create a graphic design or study.
- Researching religious artefacts on the website.
- Setting up e-mail with another school from a different country.
- Following the Internet Access Policy.

Science

- The development of an understanding of our place in the great scheme of things by studying space or life processes.
- Consideration of moral, environmental and citizenship issues when considering our role in caring for the environment e.g. efficient ways of feeding the world, intensive farming, and the pollution of the planet.
- Health, drugs, smoking – an understanding of the social and scientific issues involved and an awareness of everyone's point of view.
- Group work on a shared topic or investigation promoting an appreciation of the input of all members of the group.

Design Technology

- The aesthetic aspect of good design is an important area, as is the question 'How will this affect the environment?'
- Appreciating design in nature.
- The study of technologies from different cultures – historical and geographical – and how these have evolved provides important lessons in cultural awareness.
- Group working – sharing of equipment and designing together.

- Promoting equality of opportunity and providing an awareness of areas that have gender issues e.g. activities that are historically female such as textile studies, encouraging girls to use equipment that has been traditionally male dominated.

History

- The study of artefacts, buildings, churches etc. gives children a sense of their place in the historical scheme of things
- Moral issues can be considered. For example, was it right that war was fought or that children were forced to work in factories and mines in Victorian Britain, or that Anne Frank was forced into hiding?
- Studying the cultures of other times – Egyptians, Greeks, Romans etc. builds an awareness of the value and importance of other societies and cultures and the relative value and importance of our own.

Geography

- The study of different localities helps children to understand the background, way of life and values etc. of different people and cultures. Eg. The Inuits and their way of life and values are to a large degree the result of habitat – as is our own.
- Tolerance of other people's differences, overcoming stereotyping, racism and prejudice can all be highlighted through the study of different peoples and their way of life.
- Environmental issues and concerns can be discussed – what are the effects and the issues involved in urbanising an area.

Art

- Studying great works of art can give an insight into the culture of other people and provide a strong link with the past.
- Art can provide a valuable tool to study the past and make social or moral comment on it for example, what do the people in works by Lowry tell us about the social conditions of the time?
- The appreciation of great works of art and the appreciation of our own attempts helps to build up an awareness of aesthetics and gives an uplifting experience.

Music

- Listening to music, performing, joining in with it gives pleasure, lifts spirits and has an emotional dimension that children need to experience. Music experienced in our services and assemblies helps the pupils in their spirituality.
- Listening to and appreciating the great music of our culture builds an important awareness of our culture and that of other lands. Music of other cultures is important for the same reasons.
- Group music making is an important social activity – working together and experiencing the same feelings together.

Physical Education

- Caring for our bodies and respecting the health of others.
- Obeying the rules of the game, being a 'good sport', learning to be a good winner and a good loser, learning to take part and doing one's best is important.
- Appreciating the aesthetic beauty of the movements of gymnastics or dance.
- Building team spirit, being a good team member, valuing the contributions of others to the team.
- Learning that sport is an important element of many cultures – Ancient Greeks, Romans, the history of great sporting events such as the Olympics or the Ashes.

Relationships, Health and Education

- Listening to others.
- Holding debates and discussions leading to written work.
- Drama and role play linked to choices.
- Drawing pictures of feelings and emotions.
- Follow SEAL pack

Religious Education

- The exploration of moral and spiritual questions by discussing, for example, the great Bible stories or the stories from other religions.
- Appreciating and valuing other faiths and beliefs of both groups and individuals.
- Learning about being a member of a pluralist society and respecting and tolerating others and their belief and needs.
- Knowing about the historical, social and religious aspects of our own culture and that of others
- Harvest, Christmas, Easter, May Day, Jewish New Year, Divali etc. - appreciating and respecting the values of the cultures concerned.