



Morley Memorial Primary School

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Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to clarify our understanding of children's personal development and to outline the opportunities and experiences which we give our pupils to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth.

At Morley we believe that children achieve their potential when they are healthy, emotionally intelligent and have a strong sense of community and of self. We believe that achieving our goal is a shared responsibility between our children, their families, staff, governors and the wider community. It is within this framework that our children's personal development takes place.

Personal Development

The quality of the relationships established between all those working in the school and the many visitors we welcome each week is crucial to the personal development of the children. By having high expectations of the interactions between all individuals we are ensuring that we recognise the value placed upon each individual in the school and the right that everyone has to be treated with respect. Teachers working in a climate of co-operation offer their pupils a secure and happy environment in which they can thrive. Pupils'

relationships with each other should reflect their appreciation of their similarities and respect for each other's differences.

We take a positive approach to behaviour management as outlined in our Behaviour policy. This encourages children to develop self-discipline and the skills to live harmoniously within our school community and the wider world.

For the school to create an appropriate climate of co-operation and discipline it is essential for us to be working closely with parents. We hope the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere and the quality of relationships is evident to parents when they visit the school.

The school ethos promotes personal development through:

- The clear expectations expressed by teachers and internalised by children.
- The care and respect members of the school display towards each other.
- The development of responsibilities e.g. Green Buddies, School Council, Peer Mediators.
- The value placed upon the children's work.
- The celebration of successes, great and small.

The curriculum also makes a significant contribution to the personal development of the children. Areas of the curriculum such as PSHCE, RE and assemblies make an overt contribution to children's personal development. However, all subjects can potentially allow for moral debate and personal reflection and should be taught with sensitivity for the values and beliefs of others. For example, the choice of literature read to classes should encourage discussion, the teaching of history should explore values and personal motivation and the exploration of environmental issues will raise the need to make personal choices.

Spiritual Development

Spiritual development is often seen as the most contentious and difficult area of personal development to define and develop. Morley is a multi-cultural school whose pupils come from a diverse range of backgrounds and whose families have different religious beliefs and value systems. Morley is an inclusive school and this is reflected in our approach to spiritual development. If we consider spiritual development in its widest sense it has many overlaps with the moral, social & cultural dimensions of education.

OfSTED defines spiritual development as:

The development of the non-material element of a human being which animates and sustains us and, depending on our point of view, either ends or continues in some form when we die. It is about the development of a sense of identity, self-worth, personal insight, meaning and purpose. It is about the development of a pupil's 'spirit'. Some people may call it the development of a pupil's 'soul'; others as the development of 'personality' or 'character'.

At Morley, we believe that spiritual development involves:

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

In 1993 the National Curriculum Council defined different aspects of spiritual development:

- Beliefs – the development of personal beliefs including religious beliefs; an appreciation that people have individual and shared beliefs on which they base their lives; a developing understanding of how beliefs contribute to personal identity.
- A sense of awe, wonder & mystery – being inspired by the natural world, mystery or human achievement.
- Experiencing feelings of transcendence – feelings which may give rise to belief in the existence of a divine being or the belief that one's inner resources provide the ability to rise above everyday experiences.
- Search for meaning & purpose – asking 'why me?' at times of hardship and suffering: reflecting on the origins and purpose of life, responding to challenging experiences of life such as beauty, suffering and death.
- Self-knowledge – an awareness of oneself in terms of thoughts, feelings, emotions responsibilities and experiences: a growing understanding and acceptance of individual identity; and ability to build up relationships with others.
- Relationships – recognising & valuing the worth of each individual; developing a sense of community; the ability to build up relationships with others.
- Creativity – expressing innermost thoughts & feelings through, for example, art, music, literature and crafts; exercising the imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight;
- Feelings and emotions – the sense of being moved by beauty or kindness; hurt by injustice or aggression; a growing awareness of when it is important to control emotions and feelings, and how to learn to use such feelings as a source of growth.

Spirituality is not synonymous with religious development. There is no intention that we should be giving children a set of beliefs but instead we should be promoting curiosity, openness, reflection and open-ended enquiry about issues related to themselves and life's ultimate questions.

Spiritual development is related to the 'inner life' of a child and is often characterised by reflection upon the ultimate questions. Our understanding is that both those who adhere to traditional views of spirituality and those who view spirituality as the development of the human spirit in a humanistic form can support our definition of spiritual development as a quest for meaning and an ability to feel that sense of awe that feeds our inner being.

Religious Education makes a contribution to the child's spiritual development because the religions that are studied pose questions and answers to the important questions of life. However, all areas of the curriculum contribute to spiritual development: for example, aesthetic appreciation of art and music, the achievement of a physical challenge, the wonder of the natural world, the fulfilment of reaching a conclusion to a mathematical problem, empathy developed through literature and drama. Our teaching will promote these experiences but because of the unique personal nature of each child's responses to these experiences it is very difficult to evaluate our success.

It is important that as we give children time to explore and reflect upon issues in order that they may develop a personal response. The answers the children eventually choose to adopt for themselves may be totally different from the beliefs of those who taught them, but by developing the children's powers of evaluation and reflection we hope that they will be equipped to face their own personal search for meaning.

Children have many opportunities to develop explore and experience aspects of spirituality at school. Some of these are planned as part of the curriculum and assemblies, some are part of the wider curriculum and some arise through incidental events, when staff capitalise on the unexpected.

It is important to give children a wider perspective beyond their immediate family, to make them aware of the possibilities in life through exposure to and exploration of the diversity of human existence

The way in which situations are handled in school contributes greatly to the spiritual development of pupils; it is often the process rather than the event that is the most influential dimension. For example if sorting out a fight, helping children see the situation from each other's point of view rather than just punishing them for fighting.

The Place of Collective Worship in Spiritual Development.

At Morley, worship means a reflection or contemplation, offering the children the opportunity to reflect on some of life's important questions. It takes place daily in a variety of groupings; whole school, Key Stage, phase and class groups. The subject matter needs to be appropriate for the age range and experience of the audience & sometimes issues raised in a large group can be followed up in a more appropriate way back in the classroom. Sources for collective worship may include:

Celebration of world festivals

Stories from different faiths

Celebration of achievements of groups & individuals both in & out of school.

Picture books with a message

Environmental Issues

Stories about human issues eg freedom, justice, kindness

Issues that have arisen in school eg anti-bullying, behaviour & concern for others

Moral Education

Moral education in schools refers to the development of the children's ability to understand the differences between right and wrong and to act accordingly. Through giving children the chance to explore issues and personally reflect upon the consequences of actions it is hoped that they will develop the ability to make rational decisions based upon knowledge and to match their behaviour to their beliefs.

Although the school clearly upholds a value system and provides the children with a moral framework in which to operate it is not our intention to impose values. We hope to encourage children to think through why and how they should behave so that eventually they may become autonomous individuals.

The school promotes moral education, through the example set by all adults in school and by the clear and consistent moral framework that reflects the values that we hold. These are generally considered to be common to all civilised cultures and belief systems. The delivery of the curriculum and the development of skills also prepare children to address more complex moral issues.

As discussed in the section on personal development, the quality of the relationships established in school underpins the development of the individual and influences the child's personal growth. This is clearly the case in issues related to moral education and the example set by the adults in school will give the children an opportunity to witness the values being demonstrated: for example, the respect for individuals, and the respect for property.

The moral framework within which we all operate allows us to ensure the children receive consistent messages and experiences.

The school values include:

- Telling the truth
- Respecting the rights and property of others
- Helping others
- Taking personal responsibility for one's actions
- Environmental awareness
- Self discipline

Our expectations of behaviour are contained within the school Behaviour Policy and are discussed with children as appropriate. At the beginning of each school year children discuss and agree a code of conduct that establishes a moral framework for the classroom. These agreements are written in language that reflects the age and understanding of the children.

Moral issues and our moral framework are also explored through assemblies and opportunities are given for children to reflect upon the values upheld and the behaviour which is desirable.

The curriculum affords many opportunities to extend the children's knowledge and skills. Religious Education is an example of a subject that can offer an opportunity to review a range of moral codes and to consider the idea that members of a faith community will uphold a set of moral beliefs and will act accordingly. For example, by studying the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount and the Five Pillars of Islam children will discover the similarities and differences in the moral codes followed by Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Other areas of the curriculum also contribute to the child's moral development and help them explore the moral implications of the subject matter. This can clearly be seen in PSHCE when children use drama and discussion to reflect upon many complex moral issues. In History children consider issues such as child labour during Victorian times and in Geography environmental issues pose interesting dilemmas. Science, technology, literature and current affairs can all stimulate discussions about ethical issues.

The primary school curriculum offers opportunities for children to develop skills such as decision taking, investigating and analysis of facts. These must be well refined and combined with self-confidence and self-discipline if eventually children are to achieve the degree of moral autonomy that will enable them to make their own judgements and behave according to their own beliefs and principles guided by the moral framework of the school.

Social Development

Pupils' social development refers to pupils' acquisition of knowledge, understanding, attitudes and abilities which will prepare them to play a full part in society. This involves children gaining knowledge of the institutional structures of society, from the family to political organisations. It also includes helping children to experience opportunities to contribute to activities within the school and the wider community.

Our PSHCE curriculum provides the foundation for our work on social development while materials and attitudes presented in assembly, moral education, extra curricular activities and through our school ethos all promote the values of social development.

A key to social development within the Primary school is the development of the children's self-esteem. Through encouraging the children to have confidence in their own skills, attitudes and opinions we can seek to lead them from usually egocentric members of our nursery class to reflective members of Year 6. We aim to develop children who can listen to and evaluate the opinions of others, express themselves clearly and contribute positively to the life of the school.

The PSHCE curriculum in the Foundation Stage focuses on developing the children's relationships with others and their understanding of themselves and their emotions. As they progress through the school the children learn to discuss their views and opinions. They develop skills which will promote their sense of self worth and will help them cope with peer pressure. The work in PSHCE eventually leads to a consideration of rights and responsibilities and an exploration of the structures of the wider society.

Other areas of the curriculum also contribute to the children's social development. Links are made in English, through discussing ideas from literature, in Geography through the study of other countries and cultures, in History through an investigation into the work of the City Council during the Cambridge Topic.

Through the school rules and expectations, clearly expressed by all staff, we endeavour to give children an understanding of the need for structures within organisations. By encouraging children to contribute to the making of classroom rules and by explaining the purpose of making rules we hope to promote self-discipline and co-operation.

The atmosphere promotes respect for each individual and helps to create an understanding of each person's needs and rights. The guidance offered in the Policy for Equality ensures that we plan to meet the needs of each child, taking into consideration issues of gender, race, class and disability.

Within each classroom teachers will provide an arena for social development. The organisation of the class and the grouping of children convey strong social messages.

As pupils work in groups or in pairs they are learning social roles such as co-operation, partnership, leadership and responsibility. They learn to respond to the ideas of others and the meaning of a common purpose. Playtimes also give children opportunities to develop social skills and learn to make friendships.

A wide variety of additional opportunities are offered in school to promote a sense of responsibility and to give children the chance to experience positive

involvement in the school community. A variety of clubs are organised during the school day and after school. At the moment these include choir, football and netball. They all give children the opportunity to contribute to the work of a team and learn the importance of co-operation. The Year 6 residential trip gives children a chance to enhance their relationships with each other and other adults as well as developing independence.

The School Council with members from Year 1 upwards gives the children a chance to take on responsibilities and to make a positive contribution to the running of the school. The election of these members also gives the children the opportunity to experience democracy in action. The fund raising activities which the children undertake help to develop their sense of responsibility and give them an appreciation of the needs of others.

Where appropriate, we also enjoy the opportunity to take part in activities in the wider community. For example, at our Harvest Celebrations children act as hosts to our elderly visitors.

Cultural Development

When we consider cultural development in our school we are referring both to deepening all children's understanding of their own cultural roots and to the broadening of their cultural horizons.

At Morley, a significant percentage of our children have a language other than English in their home background. Some families come to England for a short period although many are based here permanently. Our aim is to give all children an opportunity to reflect upon the customs, religious beliefs and cultural heritage represented in school, thereby fostering a respect for cultures and traditions other than their own. We endeavour to promote co-operation with all groups in order to achieve our educational goals.

Culture is a complex concept and it must be acknowledged that each culture is evolving and changing; children need to learn about those features of the past which influence and shape the present.

Both the formal curriculum and other more general school provision support the children's cultural development. Through ensuring that the children have a wide range of cultural opportunities we can enrich, deepen and broaden their experiences of all aspects of culture. We have a wealth of opportunities in Cambridge to enrich children's cultural experience, for example through visits to museums and art galleries. Many special exhibitions are mounted which support our curriculum work. We are also very fortunate as many visitors come to school to give very informative talks on a range of curriculum areas. There are also excellent theatre groups, authors and storytellers who work in this area.

In music, the children listen to classical music from many periods, study music from around the world and have opportunities to perform before their friends

and families. We have also enjoyed many concerts and performances by a range of musicians. Within the art curriculum children are introduced to a very wide range of artists and artistic styles. The resources which have been purchased have enabled us to develop the children's knowledge and appreciation of artwork around the world and to make links with many Geography topics.

In recent years we have also been fortunate to have the support of many parents who have introduced the children to a range of stories and dances from around the world. Major festivals have also been opportunities when families have shared their experiences with our children and cooked celebration foods.

The work of staff focussing on raising achievement amongst black and bilingual children has been invaluable. As well as individual children receiving support in classrooms, colleagues have received advice and support on both curriculum delivery and planning which has enabled us to support the cultural development of all children.

By presenting the children with opportunities to explore and reflect on their own culture and the culture of others, we hope to enhance their knowledge and interest, foster tolerance and promote a genuine appreciation of the richness of the cultural traditions from around the world.

Record Keeping

No formal record keeping system is in place for pupil's spiritual development, although comments pertaining to this area are often made through annual reports or parent consultations.

Some children will have aspects for development highlighted through IEPs.