

ST. ANNE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR MORAL DEVELOPMENT

“.... providing a warm and caring learning environment in which we work and live as Jesus taught us.”

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MISSION STATEMENT

“In St Anne’s we strive to build good relationships throughout the school community, providing a warm and caring learning environment, in which we work and live as Jesus taught us.”

AIMS

Leadership and management in the school are based upon mutual support and a shared vision. We are a self-evaluating school where everyone takes responsibility for leading the school forward.

Our commitment is within a strong interaction between home, school and parish. We give children in our care the fullest possible support in their learning and personal spiritual journey.

We have high expectations in all areas of school life and are dedicated to enabling all children to achieve their full potential.

As a school community we demonstrate and model behaviour and attitudes towards each other encouraging mutual respect. We promote enjoyment in learning, helping children to develop a sense of self worth and to feel secure and valued.

In our school, learning is central to teaching. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum and stimulating learning environment that gives children responsibility and opportunities to develop according to their individual talents and capabilities.

Health and safety is of the utmost importance within the school community. We maintain a safe and secure environment for all.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Definition

Moral education helps pupils to acquire knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is “right or wrong”.

As they develop a sense of morality, pupils should become more able to explore the place of reason in ethical matters and, as autonomous moral agents, acquire value systems, which are their own (rather than simply transmitted by others and accepted uncritically), together with the understanding that their behaviour and actions should derive from these beliefs and values. Schools can do much to encourage young people in their early years by providing them with a moral framework within which to operate and, as they mature, by helping them to decide what they hold as right and wrong, why they do so and how they should act – that is, that they should behave well, in accordance with a moral code.

Moral development involves the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, in a social context. Moral development, therefore, is about a growing awareness of, and a positive response to, the demands of living as an individual with others in community. As a school, therefore, it is important to consider how an individual pupil and a teacher can best develop his or her unique way within an identifiable Catholic community. ***(Spiritual and Moral Development Across the Curriculum – Catholic Education Service)***

The educational mission of the Church brings to life Christ’s new commandment “that you love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 13:34). This gospel value is lived out in the daily life of the school in many ways including:

- Forgiveness
- freedom
- tolerance
- respect
- relationships

The importance of moral development has been acknowledged by government legislation as being vital to the holistic development of pupils. (***Education Reform Act 1988, Education (Schools) Act 1992, School Inspections Act 1996***).

The Ofsted Inspection Handbook does not define a set of morals. Instead, it defines the essence of moral development as the building of:

‘a framework of moral values which regulate personal behaviour ... through teaching and promoting principles rather than through reward or fear of punishment.’

This involves:

- extending pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the range of accepted values in society
- developing pupils’ skills and attitudes, such as decision-making, self-control, consideration of others, having the confidence to act in accordance with one’s principles and thinking through the consequence of actions
- promoting, at an appropriate level, pupils’ understanding of basic moral philosophy and the skills of analysis, debate, judgement and application to contemporary issues.

(Promoting an evaluating pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Ofsted March, 2004).

Religious Education (RE) helps young people to develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. (Religious Education ; realising the potential – Ofsted, October 2013).

CHARACTERISTICS OF MORALITY

Pupils who are becoming morally aware are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- an ability to distinguish right from wrong, based on knowledge of the moral codes of their own and other cultures.
- a confidence to act consistently in accordance with their own principles.
- an ability to think through the consequences of their own and others’ actions.
- A willingness to express their views on ethical issues and personal values
- An ability to make responsible and reasoned judgements on moral dilemmas
- A commitment to personal values in areas which are considered right by some and wrong by others
- A considerate style of life
- A respect for others’ needs, interests and feelings, as well as their own
- A desire to explore their own and others’ views
- An understand of the need to review and re-assess their values, codes and principles in the light of experience. (***Ofsted Handbook 2004***)

PROMOTING MORAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to encourage pupils' moral development at St Anne's:

- we provide a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school
- we promote measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria
- we give 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
- we provide an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practise moral decision-making
- we reward expressions of moral insights and good behaviour
- we deal with breaches of agreed moral codes where they arise – for example, in the press, on television and the internet as well as school.
- by modelling, through the quality of relationships and interactions, the Christian principles which we wish to promote – for example, fairness, integrity, respect for persons, pupils' welfare, respect for minority interests, resolution of conflict, keeping promises and contracts.
- through recognising and respecting the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the school and wider community
- by encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions; for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour e.g. class rules
- by providing models of moral virtue through literacy, the humanities, sciences, arts, assemblies and acts of worship
- through reinforcing the school's values through the Mission Statement, images, posters, classroom displays
- by monitoring, in simple pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided.

People who are developing morally listen to their conscience, the inner sense, informed by their upbringing, experiences and faith or religious beliefs that prompts them to do what is right out of love for others, respect for themselves and regard for the world in which they live.

The morality of pupils at St Anne's is promoted and developed through the entire educative process, especially through:

The Distinctive Nature of Our School:

The ethos at St Anne's encourages the development of a positive moral base in our dealings with everyone and the way in which we treat the world around us. School Policies such as Special Educational Needs, Equal Opportunities, Behaviour and Child Protection show our commitment towards the moral development of the children in our care.

Curriculum Subjects:

The opportunity for promoting moral development arises in a wide range of curriculum areas. Religious Education is seen as the prime curriculum opportunity for promoting moral development. St Anne's recognises that moral development can also be encouraged through a variety of other curriculum areas such as PSHCE, Literacy and Science. It is highlighted that the moral development of learners filters into other curriculum areas and should not specifically be 'left to' Religious Education. Moral development is also covered in the Restorative Justice work which is undertaken by Year 6.

Collective Worship:

Each Key Stage holds a weekly act of Collective Worship and this is led, on a rota basis, by staff. The theme of the Collective Worship each week relates closely to the current topic being covered in the Come and See Religious Education Scheme. Where appropriate, staff may use material from the Come and See Scheme to enhance and develop the children's' experience of Collective Worship. There are numerous opportunities for the development of moral education via stories and prayers which are used during Collective Worship..

Away Days:

The Year 6 children take part in a 'Retreat Day' organised in collaboration with the Parish community. The day is primarily focussed on team building and self-esteem activities, however, the children also experience prayer session during the course of the day.

RESOURCES

There are a wide variety of resources available to provide ideas and assistance with areas of Moral Development, such as Prayer Books, Bibles and Literacy texts. Each class teacher has a full catalogue of these resources which are kept in the curriculum storage area outside the Year 6 classroom.

DEVELOPMENT

The Policy will be reviewed with the cycle of Policy reviews for the school and feedback will be invited from staff and governors. The impact of the policy will be evident in the way in which children participate in opportunities for moral development and the way in which links with other subjects are adopted.