

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy 2021

The Link Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, regulated by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). All Members of the Board of Trustees of the exempt charity are also Directors of the company; the term 'Trustee' used in this Policy also means Director. This Policy applies to all schools within the Link Academy Trust.

Introduction

Within the Link Academy provision for the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded through the whole school community, through its ethos, curriculum, collective worship and positive attitudes and values. It is promoted through all the subjects of the curriculum. This policy supports and reinforces the aims of our school, valuing all children and staff equally and as individuals and relates to the whole life of the school.

Our church schools are communities that take the moral values of Christianity as their touchstone on life.

Principles

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is crucial for individual pupils, staff and for society as a whole. We believe it is the heart of what education is all about in helping pupils grow and develop as people. It is an expectation within the Link Academy Trust 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 and through the use of appropriate teaching and learning strategies such as discussion, reflection, pupil participation, prayer time etc. The importance of relationships between all school staff, parents and governors is crucial. These relationships will be characterised by:

- mutual respect,
- positive attitudes,
- the willingness to listen and be listened to
- the appreciation of all pupils.

Aims for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The Link Academy aims towards ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum:

- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.
- To prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- To promote respect and consideration for differences in gender, race, religion.
- To help each pupil achieve their full potential across all areas of the curriculum.
- To develop the individual strengths of all pupils and to help and provide support in areas for development.
- To inspire and stimulate the pupils in order to foster a love of learning and enquiry, to reason rationally and to apply themselves to tasks and physical skills.
- To help our pupils towards independent learning and to equip them with all life skills in order for them to take their place in a fast-changing society.
- To ensure there is continuity and progression in skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum.
- To develop respect for religious and moral values and understanding of other races, religions and ways of life.
- To help the pupils understand the world in which they live.
- To develop a sense of responsibility, consideration for others, self-respect and self-confidence.
- To promote good relationships between home, school and the local and wider communities.

We strive to support the children in the development of their spiritual life so that through reflection, they will acquire insights and attribute meaning and purpose to their life. Children's spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. As their curiosity about themselves and their place in the world increases, they try to answer for themselves some of life's fundamental questions. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material well-being.

Pupils will develop:

- A sense of self worth
- The ability to sense awe and wonder inspired by the natural world, mystery and human achievement
- The willingness to explore the ultimate questions and mysteries of life
- The ability to sense the special nature of human relationships
- Spiritual capacities e.g. imagination, insight and contemplation

Implementation

Within the Curriculum

Pupils are given opportunities to explore:

- an imaginative approach to the world
- a spirit of enquiry and open-mindedness
- philosophical questions and to question what they are told within a safe environment.
- unplanned learning paths
- active and democratic learning
- values and attitudes alongside skills and knowledge
- an awareness of order and pattern in the natural world with regular opportunities to work in the outside environment

Within RE, Collective Worship and PSHE (including British Values)

Pupils are given opportunities to:

- Investigate and reflect upon their own beliefs and values
- Share what we celebrate, how and why.
- Share what is meaningful and significant to them
- Explore prayer/reflection/silence and a sense of inner space
- Experience creative arts (music, dance, drama, visual arts) when exploring spiritual realms
- Explore the meaning of commitment
- Discuss and express views whilst respecting the views of others
- Respond in a personal way (invited, not coerced)
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Beyond the Formal Curriculum

Within the school community we:

- Foster a sense of respect for the integrity of each person
- Treat all members of the school community with respect, regardless of personal feelings
- Maintain an ethos which enables pupils and staff to speak freely about their beliefs and values
- Embrace spontaneous moments and wider opportunities to explore the spiritual e.g. snow falling, a rainbow, a national event, an injured bird in the playground ...

Impact

Pupils will be able to:

- Express an awareness of the idea of 'God' within their own life or the lives of others
- Reflect on experiences (the 'wow' and 'ow' moments)
- Understand and evaluate a range of responses and interpretations
- Develop personal views and insights and a grasp of the intangible
- Apply the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to their own lives
- Develop self-awareness and understanding self-belief and worth

Assessment is primarily through observation of pupil behaviour, their relationships with others and the views pupils express about themselves, others and the world. We look for opportunities to observe pupils and for pupils to express observations about themselves.

Moral Development

Pupils are encouraged to understand the need for a common code of conduct and to follow it from conviction rather than because of sanctions or consequences. Within the Link Academy Trust we work towards an understanding of what is right and wrong. From this basis pupils may develop the ability to make judgements and to become increasingly responsible for their own actions or and behaviour.

Intent

Pupils will:

- Understand the consequences of behaviour and actions
- Be able to take moral decisions independently
- Assume moral responsibility through belief and conviction
- Be able to distinguish between right and wrong
- Develop an understanding of Christian based values
- Develop an understanding of British values (see separate policy)

Implementation

Within the Curriculum

Pupils are:

- Encouraged to develop a personal view on morality and ethical questions raised through the curriculum (e.g. injustice in History, deforestation in Geography, fairness in P.E., ethical questions in Science etc)
- Encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to set personal targets
- Given opportunities to develop thinking and reasoning skills enabling responsible decision making

Within RE, PSHE and Collective Worship

Provision includes:

- Exploration of a clear moral code based on the Christian values of sacrificial love, repentance, forgiveness and truthfulness
- An exploration of Christian moral perspectives alongside models of morality within other faiths
- An exploration of moral and ethical issues through Circle Time
- A programme of daily Collective Worship which provides a framework for moral development through Christian values

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

Within the school community we:

- Set high expectations which lead to raised awareness of high moral standards both inside and outside the classroom
- Guide children to distinguish between right and wrong using scenarios from within and outside the classroom
- Provide positive role models who are fair, respect others and keep promises
- Guide children in making choices linked to consequences
- Guide children in deciding class rules
- Establish consistent sanctions

Impact

Pupils should move gradually from a 'taught morality' to taking responsibility for their own moral decisions.

We look for children demonstrating:

- An understanding of moral principles which allow them to tell right from wrong
- A respect for other people, truth, justice and property
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety
- A consideration of consequences when making choices
- An ability to stand moral ground in the face of peer pressure
- An ability to put Christian values or other moral values into action.

Social Development

The quality of relationships between all members of our school community (children and adults) is crucial. These relationships are characterised by our upholding of Christian values, mutual respect, positive attitudes, the willingness to listen with empathy and by the valuing of each other.

This enables pupils to become conscientious participants in their family, class, the school, the local and wider community. 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. It is

part of the school's responsibility to support pupils and their families in the formation of good social attitudes.

Intent

Pupils will:

- Relate positively to others, valuing their gifts, talents and worth
- Engage successfully in partnership with others
- Exercise personal responsibility and initiative
- Understand that as individuals we depend on others (e.g. family, friends and society)
- Participate fully and take responsibility in the classroom, school and wider community (see British Values)
- Build relationships through our Christian values

Implementation

Within the Curriculum (including RE)

Pupils are given opportunities to:

- Work collaboratively within team or group situations
- Develop leadership skills
- Consider the views and ideas of others (e.g. during investigations, class discussions and debates)
- Respond to others with empathy, sensitivity and respect

Within PSHE and Collective Worship

Provision includes opportunities to:

- Develop a sense of community and inclusion rooted in values
- Consider how Biblical characters and stories provide positive models of relationships and models for society
- Celebrate examples of good citizenship
- Develop an understanding of British values and how these support our society
- Consider how empathy, respect and sensitivity contribute towards building good relationships

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

Social development is supported through:

- The nurturing of good relationships being modelled by all members of the school community
- An understanding of the place of our school within the wider community – locally, nationally and globally (e.g. Diocesan links)
- Pupils taking responsibility as Play Leaders and School Ambassadors and other roles of responsibility
- Involvement in clubs and extra-curricular activities
- Ensuring that all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrating how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils
- Welcoming visitors to the school and making visits outside school
- Positive interaction between members of the school and wider community through performances, sporting events, community festivals, links with other schools and visiting specialists
- Involvement in theme weeks and projects which encourage a sense of community and belonging

Impact

We look for children demonstrating:

- A growing in self esteem
- Socially acceptable behaviour, both in classroom and other contexts
- Developing relationships with others in work and play, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- Developing maturity through an ability to look beyond their own needs and interests to those of others
- An appreciation of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle

Assessment is primarily through observation of pupil behaviour, their relationships with others and the views pupils express about themselves, others and their place within society. We look for opportunities to observe pupils and for pupils to express observations about themselves.

Intent

Pupils will:

- Develop a sense of belonging to their own culture and develop pride in their cultural background
- Develop British citizenship and values
- Respond to cultural events
- Appreciate the values, beliefs and customs of Christian and other World Faith groups, as well as those of no faith
- Share different cultural experiences, celebrating diversity
- Show respect for different cultural traditions
- Understand codes of behaviour, fitting to cultural tradition

Implementation

Within the Curriculum

Pupils are given opportunities to:

- Explore different cultural traditions in our local and wider community, the UK and the world
- Explore cultures through the creative arts, literature, displays, IT, media
- Analyse features of cultural traditions in order to identify prejudice, intolerance and discrimination
- Experience authentic representations of cultures throughout the curriculum
- Develop an appropriate code of behaviour when experiencing events of cultural significance e.g. visits to places associated with cultural events, meeting visitors etc.
- Engage in discussion and learning about and from people of different faiths, beliefs and cultural traditions.

Within RE, PSHE and Collective Worship

Pupils are given opportunities to:

- Explore the relationship between beliefs and cultures
- Discuss and explore differences and similarities between cultures and faith traditions
- Respond appropriately to visits to places of worship or places of religious significance within the Christian and other faith traditions
- Explore issues relating to cultural development e.g. equal rights, peer pressure, discrimination and prejudice
- Take part in celebrations and calendar festivals, shared with the community
- Celebrate cultural diversity through learning about festivals and events from within other cultures

Beyond the Formal Curriculum

Cultural development is supported through:

- Experiencing different cultures through special events and celebrations planned for across the school
- An annual focus on bullying (through National Bullying Week) and the issues surrounding bullying, particularly those with a link to cultural diversity
- Developing a sense of belonging in school, family, local, wider, UK, and global communities
- Raising awareness of national and international events which bring people of differing cultural traditions together e.g. response to political situations, sporting events (like Olympic, Paralympic, Invictus and Commonwealth games, Football and Rugby World Cups), response to natural disasters etc.

Impact

Assessment is primarily through observation of pupil behaviour, their relationships with others and the views pupils express about themselves, others and their place within the world. We look for opportunities to observe pupils and for pupils to express observations about themselves:

- Responding to stories, videos and artefacts
- Participating in cultural activities including creative arts, projects, sporting events, visits etc.
- Developing attitudes of open-mindedness, sensitivity and respect
- Expressing themselves appropriately during cultural visits or when relating to visitors
- Demonstrating an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- An ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values

Role of the Co-ordinator

A named co-ordinator has responsibility for overseeing the planning, provision, monitoring and evaluation of SMSC. The co-ordinator will keep in touch with national developments and act in an advisory capacity, supporting colleagues. Staff meetings may be used for discussion and the update of information. S/he will

understand the impact that good SMSC development can have on the school as a whole, enhancing spiritual growth and preparing children for life in a world of diversity.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Reviewed by the S&C committee 29.01.2021

Approved by Trustees 08.02.2021