

BY BROOK VALLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development Policy



Last Review Date: July 2026

Ratified By Governors Date: July 2026

Next Review Date: July 2027

Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at By Brook Valley Primary CE School. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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Growing, Flourishing, Soaring

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This policy is designed to meet the needs of all pupils. The policy is designed to be child-centered and to make sure as far as is possible that pupils understand what is happening in their lives, why, and what options are available to them.

Our Vision

Roots to grow, wings to fly

Planted in love, growing in wisdom;

Flourishing and soaring, reaching new heights

The roots of our school community, based on our Christian values, nurture, help and support us to grow to be the best versions of ourselves. The wings of faith allow us to soar freely and flourish now and in the future

At By Brook Valley we are committed to creating a positive, safe and caring Christian environment, where all members of the school and wider community will be respected and valued. We support one another to put down strong roots within our distinctively Christian culture, growing from our core values of hope, honesty, forgiveness and friendship. In this way, we will each be the very best we can be.

This policy should be read and understood from this perspective.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

Policies, Procedures or Practices	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy	Date	July 2023
EIA CARRIED OUT BY:	Foundation and Ethos	EIA APPROVED BY:	

Groups that may be affected:

Are there any concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for positive impact
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Age (young people, the elderly: issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication).		
Gender Reassignment (transsexual)		Policy highlights uniqueness and value of each individual as a child made in the image of God;
Marriage and civil partnership		
Pregnancy and maternity		
Racial Groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers		Policy stresses developing an understanding of social and cultural environment and an appreciation of the many cultures that now enrich our society.
Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)	People of different religions/beliefs could feel excluded or "different"	Policy encourages interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values
Gender (male, female)		Policy highlights uniqueness and value of each individual as a

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		child made in the image of God
Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived)		Policy highlights uniqueness and value of each individual as a child made in the image of God

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

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Guidelines

All curriculum areas have a contribution to make to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum.

Christian spirituality and Christian values and principles will be explored in all curriculum areas, especially in RE/Collective Worship, but the integrity and spirituality of pupils from other or non-faith backgrounds will be respected and explored. 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 Christian love and 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.

Pupils should 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.

Pupils should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom promises reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

All curriculum areas should seek to use illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible. This will be reflected in teacher's planning and purchasing decisions.

General Aims

- To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of our values and principles.
- To ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of SMSC issues through the curriculum and the general life of the school.
- To ensure that a pupil's education is set within a context that is meaningful and appropriate to their age, aptitude and background.
- To ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and why.
- To give each pupil a range of opportunities to reflect upon and discuss their beliefs, feelings and responses to personal experience.
- To enable pupils to develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- To enable pupils to begin to develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment and an appreciation of the many cultures that now enrich our society.
- To give each pupil the opportunity to explore social and moral issues, and develop a sense of social and moral responsibility.

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Spiritual Development:

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All we do at the school is underpinned by our above vision.

Church of England Definition of spirituality:

- SELF: being a unique person and understanding self-perception
- OTHERS: how empathy, concern, compassion and other values and principles affect relationships
- WORLD AND BEAUTY: perceiving and relating to the physical and creative world through responses to nature and art
- BEYOND: relating to the transcendental and understanding experiences and meaning outside the 'everyday'

[Andrew Ricketts, C of E, October 2019](#)

Our Definition of Spirituality

As a school we have taken inspiration from the above definition and developed our own Spirituality Flower which visually depicts and supports our whole community in their spiritual growth. We aim to give children opportunities to think about themselves, others, the world, beyond and God and to connect with these. To support this, we develop skills of reflection, resilience, compassion, tolerance, appreciation and inquisitiveness. These help the children to grow as spiritual beings in an environment of inclusion and respect.

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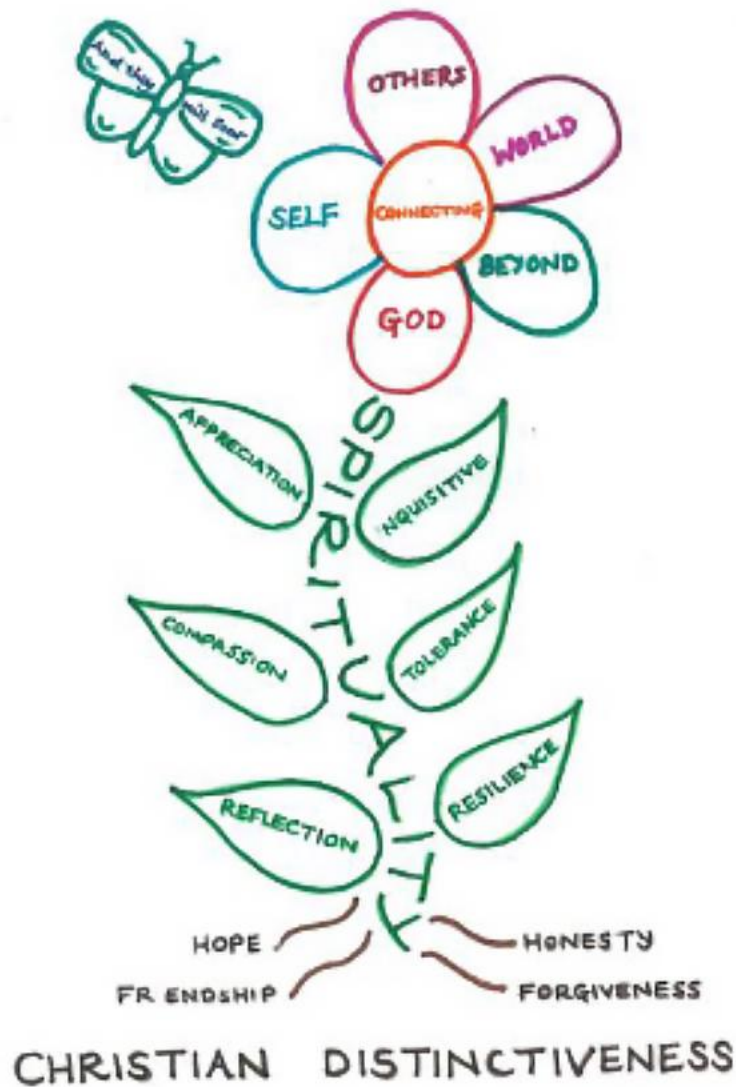
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Spiritual development is concerned with the exploration and development of feelings and emotions; personality, individuality and uniqueness; and knowledge and understanding of their own and different beliefs and cultures. Understanding of self and others is at the heart of spiritual development and is not linked solely to a particular doctrine or faith. Spiritual development, is, therefore, accessible to everyone. All areas of the curriculum should contribute to pupils' spiritual development. As a church school, we place special emphasis on the specific teaching and beliefs of the Christian faith, both within the daily life of the school and through the curriculum.

Pupils' spiritual development is shown by their:

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- 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
- Sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences.

Spiritual Development Aims: In order to foster spiritual development, the school aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God;
- Develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of this church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others);
- Develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life;
- Develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth;
- Understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on self, others, beauty and beyond

Spiritual Development - Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues these aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, as documented in all school policies;
- Opportunities for spiritual development will be pro-actively planned into the curriculum and actively encouraged in all areas of school life;
- Collective worship will celebrate the love of God for every individual and provide opportunities for children to respond to this;
- The school building and outdoor environment will provide appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer
- That children's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight will be fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies;
- That children's moral development will be linked to spiritual development through strategies such as windows, mirrors and doors
- That the RE curriculum will deliver knowledge and understanding about a range of perspectives relating to spirituality;

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- That children will be given many opportunities to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected.

Moral Development:

Moral development is concerned with pupils' ability to make judgements about how they should behave and act and the reasons for such behaviour. It refers to their knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes in relation to what is right or wrong. Pupils are encouraged to understand the need for a common code and to follow it from conviction rather than because of consequences or sanctions. Moral development, based on Christian principles and values, should enable pupils to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and behaviour.

Pupils' moral development is shown by their:

- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, readily apply this understanding in their own lives and, in doing so, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Ability to recognise the unique value of each individual as a child of God.
- Ability to recognise the challenge of Jesus' teaching.
- Understanding the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues and being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.

Moral Development Aims: To foster moral development, the school aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- Recognise the difference between right and wrong and begin to understand how Christian values inform a particular perspective on moral choices;
- Understand how our moral choices can affect the lives of others;
- Be able to work together to agree codes of behaviour that are appropriate for our school community;
- Understand the centrality of forgiveness and reconciliation in the life and culture of our school;
- Begin to engage with big questions concerning morality and ethical issues in the wider community and in the world, and to realise that each of us has a responsibility to work for justice.

Moral Development - Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues these aims by ensuring that:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life are explicitly rooted in Christian values, as documented in all school policies;

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- Opportunities for moral development will be pro-actively planned into the curriculum and actively encouraged in all areas of school life;
- Our Christian values are shared with members of our school community
- Collective worship and assemblies celebrate practical demonstrations of Christian values lived out in the life of the school, local, and wider community.
- Our behaviour policy makes clear that every child is treated fairly and is always offered the opportunity for a fresh start;
- Parents and carers are made aware, through our website and other documentation, of our school's expectations regarding behaviour, as well as the rewards and sanctions that we operate;
- Children gain skills in conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies;
- Children are made aware of moral and ethical issues in the national and international context
- Pupils are fully involved, alongside teachers, senior leaders and governors in reviewing the impact of our Christian values on the behaviour, culture and ethos of our school.

Social Development

Social development refers to the development of abilities and qualities that pupils need to acquire if they are to play a full and active part in society. This begins with family and friends and extends to the wider community beyond. Social development should balance the positive elements of belonging to a group or society with the demands such membership requires. The school provides a suitable environment for promoting social development within a Christian context. Pupils learn to lead, to use their initiative and to use individual skills and strengths when working together towards a common goal. The ability to be led, to support others and to recognise the different skills of other group members can be developed when children work co-operatively. Pupils are taught to respect each other and to appreciate each other's similarities and differences. An awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the environments in which they live is also developed.

Pupils' social development is shown by their:

- Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- Willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- Basic understanding of the Christian imperative for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged.
- Acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

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Social Development Aims: To foster social development, the school aims to provide opportunities for children to:

- Build relationships founded upon the Christian values (e.g. trust, honesty, forgiveness and service);
- Gain a clear understanding of the place of the church school within the wider Christian community including local, national and worldwide;
- Access pastoral support from school staff, local clergy and parish team members;
- Be equipped to become responsible citizens who recognise the importance of service and working for the 'common good';
- Feel a sense of genuine pride in the school and their membership of it.

Social Development - Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, we pursue these aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, as documented in all school policies;
- Opportunities for social development will be explicitly planned into the curriculum and in all areas of school life;
- Collective worship and assemblies will celebrate and reward practical demonstrations of our Christian values such as, service to the community, and acts of friendship and generosity.
- Strong mutually supportive links will be maintained and developed with the local and national church and the worldwide Anglican communion through regular worship in the parish church, participation in parish events, and church members supporting the school
- Providing pastoral support to children or family members facing challenges;
- Our school community strives to be fully inclusive
- Pupils are supported to play an active part with staff and governors in monitoring and evaluating the social cohesiveness of the school community;
- The Senior Leadership Team prioritises support and engagement with networks
- There is active engagement with parents and carers

Cultural Development

Cultural development is concerned with encountering the defining aspects of different cultures. Explorations of values, beliefs, customs, foods, artefacts and stories allow the pupils to make comparisons and develop knowledge of lifestyles and choices of others. In order to make provision for cultural development, existing knowledge, interests and experiences are strengthened and then built upon further. In this way pupils gain a deeper understanding of their own culture and the factors which influence it and gain a broader understanding of other cultures and cultural influences. The arts; music, dance, drama and art can be used to promote and develop cultural awareness.

Pupils' cultural development is shown by their:

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- Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others
- Understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of preparation for life in modern Britain
- Knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- Willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities;
- Interest in exploring, understanding and showing respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Cultural Development Aims: To foster cultural development, the school aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- Gain a knowledge and understanding of the values from their own culture, heritage, traditions and an appreciation of how they have evolved and developed over time
- Develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the cultures of those with whom they interact day by day, as well as other cultures represented in the UK
- Develop a knowledge of the local Christian heritage, particularly through "Experience Church", visits to local churches and other places of worship, and to explore their relationship with it
- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of Christianity through links overseas, RE, collective worship and events in and out of school
- Understand the relationship between religious belief and culture through a creative, challenging and interactive RE curriculum
- Explore what it means to be a child made in the image of a Creator God
- Understand what it means to be part of a community characterised by openness, hospitality and an eagerness to learn from one another.

Cultural Development - Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, we pursue our aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be explicitly rooted in Christian values, in all school policies;
- The curriculum will be delivered using creative and imaginative teaching strategies which allow individual gifts and talents to flourish;
- A range of art forms will be used to teach children about Christian heritage and tradition, and also the heritages and traditions of other faiths;
- Opportunities to take part in and respond to cultural and artistic enterprises;
- Exploration of current affairs and different interpretations of events by the media;
- Exploration of the ways in which cultural, racial, and religious prejudice can take root and learn how to recognise this and other forms of discrimination as well as ways to counter it;

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- Whole school projects which celebrate diversity within the local and wider community feature;
- Links with our Diocese and dioceses overseas help children understand this as a church school.

Teaching and Organisation

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.

All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

Links with the wider community

- Visitors are welcomed into school.
- Links with the Church are fostered through links with the local church and the Diocesan Board of Education. Further enrichment opportunities are promoted through visits to other places of worship and/or visitors to school.
- 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 for it.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

SMSCD is the responsibility of **all** staff and governors, as it has a fundamental impact on the quality and nature of the education offered by our school.

1. The Head teacher will have the responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of SMSCD
2. The SMSCD lead will ensure that our current policy is regularly reviewed, up to date, and a true reflection of practice in our school;
3. The SMSCD lead has the responsibility for ensuring that all staff, parents and governors understand how the school interprets SMSCD and to ensure that regular, appropriate professional development is provided;
4. The SMSCD lead teacher will work with SLT and the Foundation and Ethos Committee of the governing body to monitor and evaluate the impact of opportunities for SMSCD across the curriculum.

This will be achieved by:

- a) Auditing curriculum and policies to ensure that the school's values are the starting point for curriculum design;
- b) Monitoring of lesson plans and the quality of teaching and learning;

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- c) Evaluating the impact of SMSCD provision through work scrutiny, reflection journals, and pupil conferencing;
- d) Input at staff meetings, school governors' meetings and parents' forum to maintain the profile of SMSCD in the school;
- e) Sharing good practice from within our school with other schools where appropriate;
- f) Ensuring that SMSCD development is a priority.

Appendix- SMSC DEVELOPMENT from a Christian Perspective.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN A CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

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God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God and God lives in him. 1 John 4:10

A Christian perspective on Spiritual Development

In the Bible, the Hebrew word *ruach* has a rich range of meanings: spirit; breath; wind; life-giving. The Latin root *spiritus* also can be translated *breath*. These words contain the ideas of animation and vibrancy, the understanding of life as a gift – we are ‘brought alive’ by God and invited to live that life to the full. For Christians this encompasses the whole being: mind, body and spirit. Spirituality is an integral dimension of the whole life.

Christians believe in a God who is the source of all life, thereby placing an inherent goodness at the heart of everything. All of life is sacred, to be respected, protected and enjoyed ‘The spiritual life,’ wrote Henri Nouwen, ‘does not remove us from the world, it leads us deeper into it.’ The Bible teaches that humanity has been made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26). Therefore, all people are spiritual beings, with the capacity for relationship with God. This relationship is rooted in love, for ‘God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God and God lives in him’ (1 John 4:16). It is for this reason that Augustine prayed, ‘You [God] have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in you.’

For children’s spirituality to develop and flourish there must be trust; trust in a God who loves them and trust that school is a safe place where their doubts, fears and questions will be listened to.

In Collective Worship, children are given the opportunity to praise God for the wonders of the world, to give thanks for God’s limitless love and to learn about and celebrate the shared Christian values which unite them as a school family. The gospel stories and other Biblical teaching will therefore be seen as the root of the Christian values that shape the school’s life, values such as trust and thankfulness, friendship and forgiveness. This means that Collective Worship will be the life-giving thread weaving through all aspects of the community life.

Opportunities for spiritual development will also be actively planned into all aspects of the curriculum. Spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy, and insight will be modelled in different ways by staff and also encouraged and celebrated in children. There will be a shared understanding that the spiritual life of the school is the wellspring of moral, social and cultural development and all that makes the community what it is and strives to become.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN A CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Love must be sincere. Hate is evil; cling to what is good.

Be devoted to one another in love.

Honour one another above yourselves. Romans 12: 9-10

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

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A Christian perspective on Moral Development

For Christians, morality is not just about good behaviour, it is about shared values that are rooted in Christian belief. Forgiveness is a central value in moral development. Christians believe that *all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). This means that all people do wrong things. Christians use the term 'sin' to mean both wrong things that hurt others, as well as things that hurt God. At the heart of the Christian gospel is the message that God dealt with sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is mercy and forgiveness offered to all who repent. In addition, Christians believe that the Holy Spirit works in believers to transform and renew them. Jesus taught his disciples that, as forgiven people, they should also forgive others.

Forgiveness does not mean accepting the wrong-doing or ignoring the consequences. Justice is a fundamental value, indeed children seem to have an innate sense of justice. However, the need for justice must be set in the context of the importance of restoring and reconciling relationships. In church schools, a balance should be forged between these. Truth and integrity are also at the heart of the Christian message. Jesus taught that He was 'truth' (*John 14:6*) – so honesty and truthfulness should be prominent in church school policies and practice.

These beliefs shape the values that lie at the heart of a church school and will characterise its approach to moral development. Love predominated in all aspects of school life, since it was God's act of love that brought salvation to the world. *Agape* is the Greek word used for God's love in the New Testament. *Agape* love is self-giving and costly. Christians look to the life and teaching of Jesus to help them understand what this means in practice.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN A CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL. *The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body.*

So it is with the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12

A Christian perspective on Social Development. Social development is about living successfully in community.

For Christians, community and relationships underpin life. The Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) models a perfect community of equals, united by a bond of love. This is the same love that God has for his creation; therefore a relationship is implied. Christians claim that humans are 'made in God's image' therefore they are made for relationship. The incarnation – God becomes human in Jesus – reminds Christians that God has relationship with his creation, that he is 'involved'. This means that God understands what it means to be human.

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The Church is described in relational terms as the Body of Christ (*1 Corinthians 12:12*). St Paul's teaching emphasises the value of each person in the Christian community: his/her gifts, talents and worth.

Although some members of the church school may not be part of the local church community, there will nonetheless be an expectation that all relationships will be informed by Christian values. These values will be modelled by staff and governors and encouraged and celebrated in children. The Bible stories that underpin the school's values will be explored and creatively expressed so that they become familiar and inspirational to all.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN A CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL *After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne. Revelation 7:9a*

A Christian perspective on Cultural Development

These words encapsulate a vision of people from many different cultural backgrounds drawn together and united in one purpose – worship. St John was given this revelation so that God's ultimate intention for humanity might be glimpsed, thus affirming all efforts to value people from different cultures.

The Christian Church was forged in a crucible of cultures. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit is described as miraculously enabling the first followers of Jesus gathered in Jerusalem to speak about the 'mighty works of God' to people from all over the ancient world, each in their own language – love.

At the heart of cultural development, therefore, is the capacity, not only to understand and appreciate those elements that have shaped one's own life, but also to open to people from very different backgrounds, and learn how to celebrate their story.

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