

St. Mary's College Preparatory School

'Fidem Vita Fateri'

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**'SHOWING OUR FAITH BY THE WAY
WE LIVE, LOVE AND LEARN'**

**RE
Spiritual and Moral Development Policy**

November 2022

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St. Mary's College Preparatory School Spiritual and Moral Development Policy

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 0-18; to provide individual challenge towards holistic and balanced development, service and achievement for life and beyond; and to try to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

At St. Mary's College Prep, pupils' spirituality and morality are promoted and developed through the entire educative process especially through our distinctive ethos; all our curriculum subjects, especially Religious Education; and Collective Worship.

Spiritual Development

Spiritual education helps pupils to acquire insights into their personal existence which are of enduring worth. It is characterised by reflection, the attribution of meaning to experience, valuing a non-material dimension to life and intimations of an enduring reality. "Spiritual" is not synonymous with "religious"; all areas of the curriculum may contribute to pupils' spiritual development.

Spiritual development, then, is concerned with how an individual acquires personal beliefs and values, especially on questions about religion, whether life has purpose, and the basis for personal and social behaviour questions which are "at the heart and root of existence". It is therefore also about what a school provides – through its curriculum, through Collective Worship, through its ethos and climate – to help individuals to make sense of these questions, and about what it does to form pupils' response to life and to various forms of experience, or even to questions about the universe.

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Above all, our aim is to find effective ways of developing pupils' drive, sense of identity and self-worth; developing their principles, beliefs and values; including those that have a religious basis. We understand that all areas of the curriculum may contribute to pupils' spiritual development, not just Religious Education.

We recognise that pupils who are developing spiritually are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- a set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour;
- an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs;
- a respect for themselves and for others;
- a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion;
- an increasing ability to reflect and learn from this reflection;
- an ability to show courage in defence of their aims, values, principles and beliefs;
- a readiness to challenge all that would constrain the human spirit, for example, poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, force, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination;
- an appreciation of the intangible – for example, beauty, truth, love, goodness, order, as well as for mystery, paradox and ambiguity;
- a respect for insight as well as knowledge and reason;
- an expressive and/or creative impulse;
- an ability to think in terms of the 'whole' – for example, concepts such as harmony, interdependence, scale, perspective;
- an understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely impact.

We endeavour to encourage pupils' spiritual development by:

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- giving pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they impact on peoples' lives;
- where pupils already have religious beliefs, supporting and developing these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them;
- encouraging pupils to explore what animates themselves and others;
- encouraging pupils to reflect and learn from reflection;
- giving pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful;
- developing a climate or ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected;
- accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals;
- promoting teaching styles which;
 - value pupil's questions and give the space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns;
 - enable pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning;
 - encourage pupils to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference – for example, asking 'why' 'how' and 'where' as well as 'what';
- monitoring in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided.

Pupils' spirituality is promoted and developed through the entire educative process especially through:

- distinctive nature – ethos;
- curriculum subjects, especially Religious Education;
- Collective Worship.

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Moral Development

Moral education helps pupils to acquire knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is right and wrong. The word 'moral' is concerned with fundamental judgements about how we should behave or act and our reasons for such behaviour. It is of the greatest importance that children develop a clear set of rules of conduct, which draw on the basic moral values and which can be applied to everyday situations.

Aims

We aim to provide our pupils with a moral framework within which to operate and, as the children 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. Schools, therefore, need to consider how an individual pupil and, of course, a teacher can best developing 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" (John, 13: 34). In our school, this gospel value is lived out in daily life in many ways, including: forgiveness, freedom, tolerance, respect and relationships.

We aim to achieve this by:

- 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 consequences 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.

We understand that 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.

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- 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 understanding of the need to review and re-assess their values, codes and principles in the light of experience.

We aim to encourage pupils' moral development by:

- Providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school.
- Promoting measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria.
- Giving 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.
- Developing an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practise moral decision-making.
- Rewarding expressions of moral insights and good behaviour.
- Making an issue of breaches of agreed moral codes where they arise – for example, in the press, on television and the internet as well as in school.
- Modelling, through the quality of relationships and interactions, the principles which they wish to promote – for example, fairness, integrity, respect for persons, pupils' welfare, respect for minority interests, resolution of conflict, keeping promises and contracts.
- Recognising and respecting the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the school and wider community.
- Encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions – for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour.

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- Providing models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts, assemblies and acts of worship.
- Reinforcing the school's values through images, posters and classroom displays.

Each class displays the class rules and has its own reward system.

Through Moral Education, we develop knowledge of:

1. How communities are organised and the importance of rules and laws.
2. How communities reconcile the needs of individuals with those of society.
3. Similarities and differences between individuals, groups and communities.
4. Fairness, justice and moral responsibility.

Cross-Curricular Skills

1. Arguing a case clearly and concisely.
2. Making choices in the light of available evidence.
3. Working with others.

Attitudes

1. Independence of thought on social and moral issues.
2. Respect for the processes of law and right of others.
3. Respect for different ways of life, beliefs, opinions and ideas.
4. A willingness to respect rational argument and non-violent ways of resolving conflict.
5. A constructive interest in community affairs.
6. An active concern for human rights.
7. An appreciation of the importance of democratic decision-making.

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Moral codes and Values – Pupils should be helped to:

1. Develop a personal moral code and explore values and beliefs.
2. Develop a concern for others.
3. Develop self-respect and respect values such as industry, honesty and truthfulness.

Pupils should be given the opportunity to:

1. Compare values and beliefs held by themselves and others.
2. Examine evidence, opinions and form conclusions.
3. Discuss differences and resolve conflicts.
4. Discuss and consider solutions to personal, social and moral dilemmas.
5. Appreciate that the distinction between right and wrong is not always straight forward