



Dixons Allerton Academy

PolicyDocumentation

Policy: Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development

**Spiritual, Moral, Social &
Cultural Development**

Statement of Policy:

As a non-faith organisation, the Academy is committed to offering scholars the opportunities to:

- identify, reflect on and explore experiences and distinguish between right and wrong and discuss moral issues in a non-prejudicial and accepting way
- develop and talk about their own attitudes and values, whilst appreciating others may choose other valid life-choices which they may not
- take responsibility for their own decisions
- develop an understanding of social responsibilities and citizenship
- Celebrate a diversity of cultures whilst recognising core British values which bind all communities' together (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs – Section 24 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015).

Procedures:

The Academy aims to create an ethos which will foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students. This development is underpinned by the following:

- the whole curriculum (see policy)
- the Personal Development Studies programme
- assemblies
- the Academy Code of Conduct & Positive Behaviour Policy
- extra-curricular activities and educational visits
- opportunities for student voice, including the School Council

Spiritual Development

The Academy supports the process of acquiring positive personal beliefs and values as:

- an active basis for personal and social behaviour thereby developing self-esteem and confidence
- the consideration of the meaning and purpose of human existence
- the seeking of answers to ultimate questions

Moral Development

- helps scholars to develop the skills and confidence to make decisions and distinguish right from wrong
- encourages scholars to develop fundamental precepts about behaviour and the reasons for behaviour
- gives scholars the confidence and maturity to listen to and respect the thinking of others, unless such views are likely to cause harm

Social Development

- The Academy enables scholars to acquire the skills and personal qualities necessary for individuals to contribute positively and effectively in society. This requires an understanding of society in all aspects, its structures and principles and life as a citizen, parent or worker in a community. Social education, particularly in Tutorial, helps scholars understand and respect civil and criminal law in Britain and how it is based on a respect for civil liberty. Tutorial, assemblies and mock elections as well as themed humanitarian days encourage students to respect and participate in the democratic process and respect the law as protecting everyone.

Cultural Development

The Academy emphasises the importance of understanding those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills that bond together to form cultures. The Academy celebrates and accepts diversity, yet emphasises commonality and our core values as a learning community.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The Academy's primary aim is to underline the spiritual concerns of humanity (e.g. matters of life and death, the purpose of life, choices in life, etc.) 'Thought for the day' allows all scholars a daily opportunity to reflect on pertinent moral and spiritual themes. All scholars study Religious Education from Year 7-11 where the emphasis is on an understanding of major world religions and what brings them together as well as separates them and also a consideration of the meaning of life. In Post-16, students will reflect on pertinent contemporary religious issues. Scholars are expected (and do) show respect for people of different views and faiths.

Collective Worship

At appropriate times of the year, and on appropriate occasions, the Academy provides quality acts of worship to open up avenues and vistas for scholars to explore, provide opportunities for experience, but not indoctrination. As a non-faith school, this worship may be from the perspective of any major world religion, or may be more humanistic. The Academy believes it is important to give students these opportunities in order to:

- prepare scholars for life - to be equipped to take part in an act of worship (to be at ease in these situations)
- educate the whole person, including the spiritual dimension – to provide experience of collective worship so that the spiritual development of students is not left to the personal biases of individual staff within subject areas or to educate scholars into secular prejudices
- provide an experimental medium for exploring key spiritual concerns of human life - educational worship is an exploration of beliefs, both religious and humanistic

Spiritual Development in the Taught Curriculum

Religious Education

'Religion is an expression of the spiritual dimension of life'. The aim of the curriculum work is to help scholars:

- in the appreciation of religious faith and the varieties of faith
- to appreciate that faith is a journey and that the acceptance of religion as a personal commitment will lead to a change in the direction of one's life
- to see practical and social consequences of religious faith so that they may form their own beliefs and judgements and their own allegiances and commitments.

This will aid scholars to appreciate the religious dimension in their search for meaning in life.

Religious Education will attempt to aid scholars to gain insight into their own religious beliefs and loyalties, sort out their personal and spiritual values and practices so that they may take up their own spiritual allegiances. It should, moreover, contribute to the moral and social development of children and young people, developing consideration for others, an appreciation of human rights and responsibilities and a concern for justice in society. Also, it should develop in scholars respect for the practices of different religious faiths and a sympathetic understanding of their underlying values and concerns. It should develop tolerance for the variety of beliefs and the customs of the citizens of our world.

Years 7 to 9 will study faiths in Religious Education both in a linear way and through a series of topics which will bring out tolerance and understanding of other faiths and cultures. Moreover, it will stimulate the students to search for meanings which they can own.

Students in Years 10 and 11 will study aspects of philosophy of religion and moral issues, from the standpoint of two major faiths.

All Areas of the Curriculum

All subjects will contribute in their particular ways to the spiritual development of scholars as they enable them to discover, learn and evaluate the world around them.

The role of the teacher in Academy is to enable scholars by discussion to think about religion and appreciate the variety of faiths by:

- using art, drama, music, languages, science and technology as well as humanities to heighten awareness of the spiritual dimension in our lives
- creating tasks which question scholars and enable them to work out their own position on issues, both moral and religious

It is also important that we remember that it is the home and community which plays the major part in forming a scholar's view of religion and developing the spiritual dimension. Spiritual development is an interaction of our community heritage and personal identity, which, for many, includes the 'depth of being'. There must also be an intellectual content to promote the development of ideas as well as skills which are personal and sensitive.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

The Academy believes that scholars should be listened to seriously and their views taken into account. However, scholars understand that not all views are equally valid and they will be challenged if the views expressed are intolerant or unaccepting of any group or individuals. Staff will particularly challenge ill-founded ideas from the internet or other sources which could be used to justify discrimination or hatred of any groups or individuals. The Academy greatly values personal integrity in all members of its community. By integrity, we mean truthfulness and acting in good faith in all human relationships.

The Academy aims to educate children to consider major world needs. This will be done through assemblies, Tutorial, charity events and innovation days.

Moral Development in the Taught Curriculum

The aims of curriculum work can be summarised as follows:

- to challenge scholars to justify their moral position
- to enable them to share with others their reflections, listen to others and struggle to resolve their disagreements with civility
- to facilitate the extending and generating of their moral reflections beyond their own immediate experience to national and international issues

The role of the teacher in Academy has the following elements:

- being alert to the moral dimensions of issues which are raised for and by students in the world around them
- the setting up of activities and tasks for scholars to enable them to work harmoniously

with scholars they may not naturally gravitate to

All aspects of the curriculum, in all years, give rise to moral issues. Examples:

- examining the economics and organisation of industry raises questions about the fairness of salary differentials, investment practices and the power hierarchy
- consideration of the role of drug companies in funding medical research raises ethical issues

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Scholars in the Academy are members of the Academy's Community; this involves an increasing awareness of their own identity as individuals and a need to work with the feelings and wishes of others. Both the formal curriculum and extra-curricular promote team work and co-operation.

The development of social skills is monitored both formally, in assessments, and informally, by the pastoral staff. Supportive measures are available where they may be needed.

In tutor groups throughout the Academy, scholars are in mixed ability, sex, previous school and ethnic groups. This fosters positive interaction between students of different



backgrounds and enables all scholars to be exposed to a wide variety of experiences. Teachers actively guide students to work in groups outside of friendship groups.

There is a planned programme of personal, social, and citizenship education, which aims to develop scholar awareness of moral issues as well as fostering a sense of responsibility and community values.

All scholars are interviewed regularly by their Form Tutors, Head of Year, Year Managers and Subject Tutors, both individually as well as in groups, in order that their full potential is reached. Records are kept of positive achievement, behaviour and effort. Concerns are regularly monitored and prompt action is taken when required. All staff are trained to report any concerns about changes in a scholar's behaviour which may indicate that they are not safe and their moral, spiritual or social development is being undermined.

Expected standards of behaviour are discussed by scholars and all staff, including administration staff. Effective communications through all sections of the Academy is maintained by an active Academy Council. All students are given the opportunity and responsibility of acting in a supporting role in various Academy initiatives, e.g. assistance with visitors, library duties, parents evening, community service.

Individuals are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities outside of normal Academy timetable – these activities range from music lessons, extra sports, and extra IT. The needs of the individual on an international basis are highlighted by the students' and the Academy's active support of a variety of charitable organisations.

Effective communication is maintained between the Academy and parents to ensure students maximise their potential. Parental contact is made through the scholar planner, interim and full reports, parents' evenings, information evenings, letters and the active participation of the Friends of Dixons (Parents' Association). All parents know that they are welcome to come to the Academy at any time.

In any aspect of the curriculum, external speakers are used to expose the students to a variety of viewpoints and opinions. The emphasis in this Academy is to allow students to take responsibility for their own actions and provide them with a solid base of information on which to build the kind of self-confidence and self-discipline expected from our students.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Academy reinforces the values and customs of society as a whole and celebrates diversity and multi-culturalism. The Academy is a morally driven institution whose three core values can be summed up as mutual respect, hard work and integrity. Our drivers of diversity, challenge, achievement inform all that we do.



The cultural influences of home, community and religion are explored in order to extend the scholars' awareness and breadth of understanding. This is achieved through the formal curriculum, through extra-curricular activities and the value placed overtly on the students' own cultural interests and achievements and the way in which they enrich their experiences of all aspects of culture (aesthetic, mathematical, literary, technological, etc.)



The Academy seeks to provide an education, which not only develops and strengthens scholars' current awareness, but also allows them to develop new cultural insights by:

- avoiding cultural bias
- promoting an appreciation of cultural diversity
- achieving a balance between 'high' culture and more immediate local cultural expressions.

Scholars are given the opportunity to learn about past features which have influenced and shaped the present, and about how present generations (including themselves) are maintaining, interpreting and reshaping their cultural tradition.

Objectives

Students should be able to:

- know about their own culture and society and value their own cultural identity
- be aware of, and celebrate, cultural diversity
- understand the interdependence of groups within society
- know about societies and cultures other than their own
- be aware of the principal ways in which different people interpret the world

Cultural Developments within the taught Curriculum

The Academy seeks to enhance the cultural development of scholars by way of:

- the formal curriculum
- extra-curricular activities
- incorporating students own home influences into discussions

Cultural Development is achieved through:

- mixed cultural grouping, both in tutorial bases and teaching sets
- fostering cultural development and awareness through issues discussed in various areas of the curriculum, e.g. Humanities/English, Religious Studies and Tutorial, Performing and Creative Arts
- organised visits which explore and investigate sites of contrasting cultural backgrounds, e.g. excursions to religious buildings such as mosques, synagogues and churches, and heritage sites such as Fountains Abbey, and sites of historical interest such as Saltaire
- sections of the curriculum emphasising the ever-changing dynamics of the world inter- relationships, through multi-media sources
- the use of (vetted) visiting speakers and members of the wider cultural community who express the same views of celebrating diversity whilst emphasising commonality that the Academy believes in
- extra-curricular activities which empathise with individuals, communities and



- cultures throughout the world, e.g. Nepal Children's Home
- foreign exchanges which prompt a greater understanding of the difference and similarities in attitudes and values of a diverse, multi-cultural world
 - links within locality through community service, Bradford Festival, work experience and other initiatives in various areas of the Academy
 - scholars' own knowledge of culture is celebrated through religious festivals and assembly presentations