

# SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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## Context

The College considers spiritual development as an important element in the College's spiritual, social, moral and cultural provision. This policy focuses on spiritual development; the remaining elements of moral, social and cultural development are addressed in the following College documentation.

- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour Management
- Careers Education Guidance policy
- Code of Conduct
- Drugs Education policy
- Equality of Opportunity policy
- Guidance on Discipline
- Sex Education policy

## ***Opportunities for Spiritual Development occur when students are:***

- **given opportunities** to experience stillness, as well as activity
- **encouraged to** become more aware of themselves as individuals with a range of personal feelings and emotions including joy and pain, and be able to express these in a safe and sensitive environment
- **given opportunities** for reflection and sharing
- **encouraged in** their recognition of the wonder and beauty of human life and in the natural world, and the possibility of a transcendent reality
- **allowed to** respond personally to story, art, music and movement in creative and developmental ways
- **working in** a secure environment which values, supports and respects each individual and relationships with each other
- **given opportunities to** explore and discuss their own beliefs in search for personal meaning and purpose
- **offered styles of teaching and learning** which shows the teacher values the learner

## Principles

The College believes that the positive promotion of a student's spiritual development is the entitlement of all students and the responsibility of all staff. Spiritual development has much to contribute to the College's Religious Education and Worship, indeed, good Religious Education is characterised by an increasing focus on spirituality. However, the College recognises that the spiritual development of students is much wider than this, and acknowledges that much of the College provision in spiritual development operates quite independently from religious belief and that many valuable spiritual experiences can be generated through secular sources. Included within our work in spiritual development is a subscription to QCA's definition of spiritual development, which states:

### **“To promote students' spiritual development is to actively encourage:**

- the growth of a students inner life, their capacity to relate to others and their non-material well-being; for example, their self-respect, their creativity, their will to achieve their full potential and their ability to ask, and try to find answers to, life's major questions, including about the existence and nature of God;
- students' acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills, attitudes and qualities they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material well-being throughout life.”

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We acknowledge that the College's approach to promoting spiritual development is informed by the College values; through its ethos and culture, the College curriculum and through behaviour and relationships.

We also acknowledge that the range of elements which contribute to, and demonstrate, the spiritual development of students include knowledge, understanding, beliefs, behaviour, attitudes and a personal response.

## Provision

The following words and statements have been identified by the College staff as aspects of the spiritual development of students and personal qualities which they consider important, and which they wish students to have access to as part of the College experience.

- Amazement
- Awe and wonder
- Conscience
- Creativity
- Non-materialism
- Peace, calm and tranquillity
- Profound personal insights about life and its purpose
- Respect
- Responding to what is incomprehensible
- Response to emotions: empathy and reflection
- Self esteem, valuing self and appreciating others
- Spontaneity
- Tolerance of others
- Uplifting experiences
- Reflection about beliefs

The College staff acknowledge the importance of the role of the curriculum in providing opportunities for spiritual development. In light of this, each department has evaluated the possibilities in their own area for promoting spiritual values and has written a statement on how they will implement whole college policy in this area, together with specific reference to which part of spiritual development is covered and where it occurs. These statements form part of each departmental policy statement and can be found in departmental handbooks.

Below are examples (one from each curriculum area) detailing where spiritual development occurs:

<b>Art</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dreamworlds where nothing is normal (surrealism). Responding to what is incomprehensible.</li><li>• Imaginary World. Responding and respecting the Aboriginal culture. Art and Tradition</li></ul>
<b>ASDAN</b>	Respect, self esteem, valuing self and appreciating others, creativity, spontaneity
<b>Citizenship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Friendships - emotions and feelings (positive and negative)</li><li>• Family and Separation - Emotions and feelings (positive and negative)</li><li>• Empathy for others and understanding/reflecting on situations</li></ul>
<b>Design &amp; Technology</b>	Portrait Project. Response to emotions: empathy and reflection. Art sketchbooks/ICT.

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<b>Drama</b>	Improvisation around a given theme. Spontaneity.
<b>English</b>	Response to emotions: empathy and reflection through class novels and other texts.
<b>Geography</b>	Tropical rainforests and the diversity of life within it. Amazement.
<b>Global Thinkers</b>	Thinking about others in different circumstances - being inspired by our planet.
<b>History</b>	WW1, discussion on propaganda posters. Conscience.
<b>Information and Communication Technology</b>	Using images and ideas to encourage emotions within the target audience.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Symmetry and patterns in nature. Peace, calm and tranquillity.
<b>Music</b>	Listening to (classical) music. Uplifting experiences.
<b>Modern Languages</b>	Tolerance and respect for others. Students are helped to develop a sense of self when talking about themselves, listening to others and finding out about life in other countries.
<b>Physical Education</b>	Use of ideas in dance and gymnastics, in particular – ideas of fair play and creativity.
<b>Religious Education</b>	Ethical debates on Siamese twins, to be separated or kept together? Conscience.
<b>Science</b>	Uses of new technology, e.g. implants and transplants. Profound personal insights about life and its purpose.
<b>Specialisms</b>	Reflection and creative response around profoundly emotional themes in Musical Performance
<b>Spirit of Leicester Module Trips</b>	Belief - own beliefs as well as learning about the beliefs of others.
<b>Tutor Time</b>	Thought for the week.

The modular programme provides many opportunities for spiritual development and over the four weeks students study various cross-curricular themes. One example of this is "The Spirit of Leicester". In this module students have the opportunity to visit several places of worship and study the impact of different cultural and religious groups in Leicester. The arts modules (China and Africa) focus on the influence of the relevant countries traditions, cultures and beliefs on modern day society.

The staff also have concluded that although it is important to plan opportunities for spiritual experiences, many such experiences occur uniquely, are different for each student and can develop in an unplanned way, often through sheer good fortune. These typically might occur during registration, tutorial periods or whilst staff are on duty. College staff are aware that they need to be sensitive to such occurrences and respond to them in positive ways.

### Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The College is committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Spiritual Development Policy. This is achieved by:

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- Staff review and feedback
- OFSTED inspection feedback

The review of the policy is initiated by the Governors' Teaching and Learning Committee each year.

## **Equality Monitoring**

Thomas Estley Community College's commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy, via an Equality Impact Assessment, has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, age, disability and avoidance of stereotypes.

Based on the Equality Impact Assessment findings, this policy is judged to be of low impact against the equality strands of Race, Gender, Religion, Disability Sexual Orientation and Age. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment of this policy is available from the Principal's PA.

This Policy is available in alternative formats on request. If you think we can improve the fairness of this Policy, please contact the individual who has responsibility for its update.