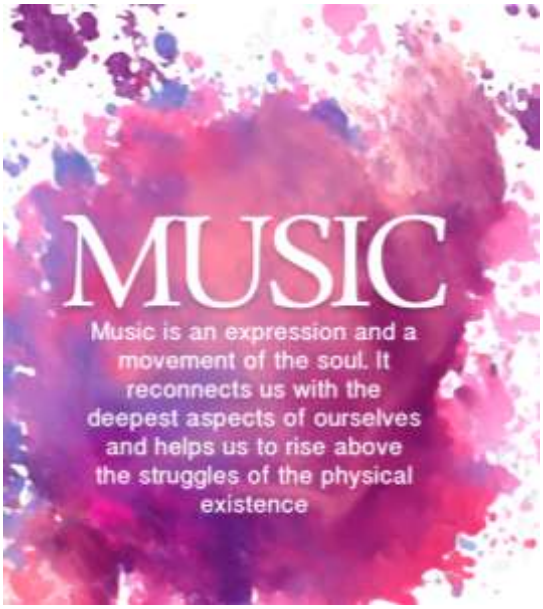
ST ALPHEGE CE INFANT SCHOOL

and

SUNBEAMS NURSERY

Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural Development Policy



Date of last review:	September 2026
Staff responsible: Executive Headteacher/ Head of School	Liz Thomas-Friend/ Jacqui Spinks
Governor responsible:	Paula Trewin (Chair of Governors)
Date of next review	September 2027

"Loved, Inspired, Shining."

Our vision is for:

- Each person to know they are loved as they are by God, flourishing and reaching their potential.
- All our families to live life in all its fullness, inspired to learn through a creative curriculum.
- Our school to "Shine like a star", bringing hope and courage to our community.

Aims:

At St. Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery, we want our pupils to be successful, confident learners and responsible citizens. We recognise the importance of both the academic and personal development and well- being of every child in our school. This includes recognising the importance of providing a range of opportunities for our pupils to respond to and support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments with an understanding and an overview of the Every Child Matters agenda.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) is outlined below as four separate dimensions, however, we are aware of the overlap between each area.

Spiritual development

Spirituality is a very personal experience. It differs from person to person and often spirituality changes within people during their lifetime. At St Alphege CE Infant School, we recognise that spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith.

We have reflected upon different definitions of spirituality:

"Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions, inspiration and being aware of something 'bigger' outside of ourselves."

"Our inner self is where we can find resources within that come from a greater source i.e God. Our soul."

As an infant school it is important that we use age appropriate language to define spirituality, so when talking to our children we will refer to:

- A sense of awe and wonder
- Care for nature and living things
- Wanting to love and to be loved by people

These are defined in more detail later in this policy.

Spiritual development enables people to look within themselves at their human relationships, at the wider world. As a church school we embrace Christian Spiritual practices including, prayer, worship, celebration of festivals and reading/reflection on the Bible within Collective Worship, RE and the wider curriculum.

We are committed to:

- celebrating the religious and non-religious beliefs and values that our pupils bring as part of their family/culture heritage and to building an awareness of and respect for others' spiritual and religious beliefs
- fostering common human values and building spiritual capacities to promote self-worth, self-esteem and a valuing of others
- helping our pupils to come to an understanding of themselves as unique individuals and encouraging them to reflect on ultimate questions
- developing our pupils' curiosity, imagination, creativity and promoting a sense of awe and wonder

Moral development:

We teach our children to recognise what is right and wrong and act on this accordingly.

We are committed to encouraging pupils to:

- be truthful and honest
- respect the rights and property of others, their opinions and customs, even when they are different from our own
- help others
- solve differences of opinion in non-violent ways

St Alphege CE Infant School and Sunbeams Nursery we will not tolerate any form of bullying, cruelty, dishonesty, violence or discrimination from anyone within our school community.

Social development:

We support our children to develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities, of living in a community and of being a "responsible citizen". We uphold the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and actively promote this with our children. We strongly believe that "Rights" are things every child should have or be able to do and that all children have the same rights. All the rights are connected to each other, and all are equally important, having been agreed by nearly every country. Sometimes, we have to think about rights in terms of what is the best for children in a situation, and what is critical to life and protection from harm. We teach our children that as they grow, they have more responsibility to make choices and exercise their rights.

We are committed to:

- fostering the skills and qualities of team building through the development of self-confidence, co-operation, sensitivity to others, reliability, initiative and understanding
- providing an environment where pupils can take responsibility for themselves and others in school and the wider society

We also use the social and emotional aspects of learning to support our pupils' social development.

Cultural development:

We are committed to ensuring our children have the knowledge and understanding of others' cultural traditions and this is woven into all areas of our creative curriculum.

We value and celebrate the cultural diversity within our school, our community, our society and the world by:

- promoting an appreciation of our own cultural tradition/s and encouraging an appreciation of other peoples' cultural traditions
- celebrating the richness of culture and tradition.

In light of this we will ensure that the SMSC development of our pupils is promoted across the curriculum and in the wider life of the school by:

- providing an appropriate range of effective teaching and learning strategies that enable pupils to reflect on and respond to the issues of SMSC importance and concern
- maintain a positive climate in school in which all are valued, respected and encouraged to make a positive contribution
- ensuring that teachers plan for and respond to opportunities to develop SMSC development and to ensure subject leaders have an understanding of SMSC education in their subject
- recognising the importance of our collective worship programme in supporting and encouraging SMSC development
- reviewing the effectiveness and impact of our policy and practice as part of our cycle of school development.

Awe and Wonder

Children are born inquisitive, and it is our duty to nurture this natural curiosity and guide them towards looking at the world and noticing, with awe and wonder, the natural and man-made delights all around us.

We want to encourage them to ask 'big questions' about life, religion, nature, science and any other area of fascination. Our School has been awarded the Green Schools Award, which is fundamental to our curriculum and the importance we place on caring for our world.

We teach our children to ask challenging questions and explore the importance of reflecting on the world around us. We take time to lie in the grass and explore the skies above. We listen to the waves at the beach and explore nature in the local countryside.

Caring for Nature and Living Things

We provide many opportunities for children to learn about nature and the role they play in protecting our world. As a Church School, this is especially important. We have strong systems of school council, TED teams and a very active Eco Club. These groups enable our children to have a voice and ownership of the world around them.

Through science and topic work, children learn about the world and how they can care for living things. Our School has been awarded the Green Schools Champion Award. We are leading campaigners in our local community around issues of social action and courageous advocacy, and have led campaigns about recycling and plastic usage.

Love

We are a very caring school and have love as one of our school values, we pride ourselves on our ethos of family. Our vision is underpinned by love and the knowledge that we are all loved by God. Through our Christian Values, we teach children to care for friends, family and the community. Indeed, our curriculum enables learning about those we love and who love us. The St Alphege Curriculum is bespoke to the needs of our community, it provides rich and relevant learning. We hold regular events in school to celebrate the special people in our children's lives.

How is Spirituality Nurtured?

At St Alphege we offer endless opportunities for all children and members of the school community to explore spirituality. As a Church of England school this often reflects our distinctively Christian character. Spirituality is nurtured partly through weekly gathered Christian worship in church or school, which is inspirational, invitational and inclusive, and partly through daily opportunities for stillness, reflection, and spontaneous response to the world including through art and creativity.

Children's spiritual development is fostered through all aspects of our provision. It is about the relationships and the values that we consider to be important, as well as the development of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. We give children opportunities to:

- Express personal beliefs and compare views with others, sharing feelings and opinions through discussions and stories.
- Begin to develop their own system of beliefs which may or may not include religious beliefs.

- Experience a love of learning through rewarding their enthusiasm and by encouraging exploratory play and learning.
- Reflect upon the world around them and show a sense of awe and wonder towards aspects of the natural world or human achievement.
- Reflect on the situations of others through role play, stories.
- Experience a range of stories, music, art, drama and dance

What is the Role of the School Community?

Koinonia (Loving Community) is one of our school values, ensuring that we place family and community at the heart of everything we do.
In school we give opportunities for reflection in lessons and collective worship, children develop an understanding of looking back and reflecting on what they have experienced. This may take the form of looking back and taking from the past, from a Bible story, from a picture/icon/view/learning experience. The focus is to help us in our lives today and tomorrow. All members of the school community have a responsibility for helping to nurture children's spiritual development.

School staff can do this through:

- Establishing and maintaining a partnership between pupils, parents and staff; recognising and respecting the faith background of the children and their families;
- Taking part in, and supporting, collective acts of worship;
- Being good role models in their conduct towards other members of the community;
- Promoting an attitude of respect for other people and for others' views;
- Nurturing consideration for and generosity towards others.
- Drawing on the experiences of pupils and their families during religious education lessons and beyond;
- Recognising and being constantly aware of the needs and backgrounds of each individual pupil;
- Being willing to develop their own knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and the faiths of others;
- Having a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education.

Children can do this through:

- Taking an active part in acts of collective worship;
- Participating in activities which promote the skills allowing them to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice;
- Conducting themselves towards others considerately, in line with the code of conduct;
- Respecting the views and beliefs of others.

Parents can help through:

- Adopting a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education;

- Supporting the school's Christian ethos and acts of community worship such as assemblies and church services;
- Respecting the views and beliefs of others.
- At St Alphege we embrace the importance of the Arts and use this as a vehicle to enable deeper thinking. By being spiritual we are exploring beliefs and our experiences; we respect all faiths, feelings and values; we enjoy learning about ourselves, others and our world; we use our imagination and creativity; we reflect.

At St Alphege we harness the power of Music and Art effectively. As a Platinum Artsmark School, we value the role that The Arts play in developing Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education in our whole school community. We harness the power of music and the Arts to allow us to deepen our children's cultural and spiritual experiences.

Music serves a Spirit-like function through its role in communicating the indescribable. It cultivates community, as sound creates communication and unity. Cultivation is a constant process that develops, encourages, and nurtures. Sound creates a spiritual connection between music-maker and music-lover. A song can give a unified voice that revolutionises and revitalises the spirit of a community.

At St Alphege we have music playing on a daily basis, children experience a range of musical styles and have the opportunity to sing every day. Adults model the importance of expressing themselves through music and a staff choir perform regularly at school events.

The imagination and creativity of a child is a precious gift. At St Alphege we have a holistic approach to education and aim to involve Body, Mind and Spirit. We regularly engage with local artists and companies to enable our children to express their feelings in a range of different ways and contexts. All children feel successful in this space because their uniqueness is celebrated. We celebrate their work and the school is full of their creations. Our school is a colourful, stimulating and vibrant place in the community.