WALTHAMSTOW MONTESSORI SCHOOL
POLICY FOR SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The personal development of pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. The school curriculum should develop principles for distinguishing between right and wrong. It should develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of their own and different beliefs and cultures and how these influence individuals and societies.

The Education Act 1996 requires that schools provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum that:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Spiritual development

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

We see spiritual development as the way children acquire personal beliefs and values, especially on questions about religion and basic personal and social behaviour. It is also about what a school provides through its curriculum, through its ethos and climate to help children make sense of these areas and help them respond to life and experiences.

Moral development

Pupil's moral development includes pupils acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right. They will learn to reflect on the consequences of their actions and learn how to forgive themselves and others. Moral development is concerned with fundamental decisions about how we should behave and act and the reasons for such behaviour and decisions. We need to enable children to reach reasoned opinions and acquire values which are their own.

At WMS we aim to provide a moral framework for children to operate in, as they mature, by helping them to decide what they hold as right and wrong, why they do so and how they should act.

As a school we value:
Telling the truth
Respecting others' rights
Acting with consideration to others
Helping those less fortunate than ourselves
Taking personal responsibility for one's actions
Self-discipline

As a school we reject:
Bullying
Cheating
Deceit
Cruelty
Irresponsibility
Dishonesty

Social development

Social development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities and an ability to relate to others for the common good. To display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. To develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and qualities and attitudes they need to make an active contribution to the democratic process in each of their communities.

Social development is concerned with the skills and personal qualities necessary for individuals to live and function effectively in society.

At WMS we build on and support the functions of home and wider community by helping to prepare our children to live in society. At school a child will join in larger and more varied groups than that of the family. Children will learn the rights and responsibilities of being a member of our school and the importance of taking into account the feelings and wishes of others. Social development is therefore closely related to the development of moral principles.

Social development is a corner stone of Montessori education with children of all ages having time together to work and understand about each other's needs. As the children get older, we provide a wider range of experiences to develop their social skills for example through school productions, team and group work, school council opportunities, visits, involvement in local events, fund raising activities and so on.

Cultural development

Pupil's cultural development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and the ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences. To acquire a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' way of doing things and curiosity about differences. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to understand, appreciate and contribute to culture. In school we aim to develop and strengthen the children's cultural interests. We will help our children to respect the values, customs and cultural heritage of others in our school and wider community whose faith or ethnic culture may be different to our own.

(A signed policy is available upon request)

This policy was adopted on dated: 1st March 2016

Date Last Reviewed: 4th September 2026

Date to be Reviewed: 4th September 2027