



# Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

## Centre Academy London

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Centre Academy London (CAL) is dedicated to providing a supportive and nurturing environment for all its students, so that each may achieve his or her full potential within the school curriculum, within the school's social activities and context and within British society as a whole.

Although non-denominational, CAL has at its heart a Christian *ethos*. However, CAL also promotes international understanding within our culturally diverse school population by emphasizing shared community and collective responsibility as well as individual responsibility. The school is committed to the belief that excellence in education can only be fully achieved when partnerships between school, parents, students and the community work as a cohesive whole.

Central to CAL's *ethos* is the belief that the education provided is not only about the gaining of knowledge and the acquiring of essential skills, important though they are, but that it is also about the personal development of each boy and girl, in its fullest sense. This includes enabling pupils to develop their self- esteem, self- discipline, respect for others and responsibility to the environment.

## **Role of School/Class Assemblies**

Assemblies generate a feeling of “belonging” and togetherness as a school family, where pupils’ achievements are recognised and valued, and the spiritual dimension emphasised as an important part of school life. Important messages about concern for others or the environment can be conveyed. Pupils and young people are involved in singing, reading aloud, drama and playing music; they also watch and listen with concentration and, indeed, respect.

The aims for our assemblies are:

- To celebrate achievement
- To promote pupils’ spiritual development
- To promote the *ethos* of the school through the expression and celebration of shared values
- To provide an opportunity for individual reflection on spiritual and moral concerns.

Assemblies take a variety of forms:

- an illustrated talk by an invited speaker/charitable organisation
- exploration of religious/moral themes
- a class-led / teacher led assembly
- ‘Celebration’ assemblies

## Spiritual Development

Religious Education (RE) plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. They will also develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own lives and independence.

Pupils' spiritual development involves the growth of their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. They will learn to explore their beliefs and experience, respect values and discover their inner selves.

The DfE guideline outlines four levels that RE teaching should address:

- The school community
- The community within which the school is located
- The UK community – a major focus of RE is the study of diversity of religion and belief in the UK and how this influences national life
- The global community – RE involves the study of matters of global significance, recognising the diversity of religion and belief and its impact on world issues.

## Religious Observance

Contemplation, reflection and celebration are important aspects of all religions. We recognise and celebrate our diverse school community. Students are encouraged to talk about and discuss their own individual belief systems whether they be through following an organised religion or a natural spiritual inclination.

CAL's methodology is that of discussion, exploration and reflection. This methodology is carried out through what is taught in its curriculum, through participation in music, drama and artistic activity, through collective worship and through the School's *ethos*. Students are encouraged to respect their own and other cultures and faiths to promote tolerance and harmony within our culturally diverse school population.

The teaching of RE is concerned with the development of understanding of religion as a significant area of human experience. It is also an aspect of personal growth enabling the individual to explore questions concerning the meaning of life. The moral element is the process whereby a person develops responsible attitudes towards others, and skills of moral judgement about what are considered to be right and wrong.

CAL is a special needs school and therefore teaching is individually tailored to the needs of our students and the community. In practice this means that subjects such

as RE, history or English might be taught discretely but also together within a humanities framework, with links to PSHE and citizenship.

## The Multi-Cultural Dimension

The aims of RE are in line with the school's policies on Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality, which offer equal opportunities for all. In line with these policies, we wish pupils to understand, appreciate and respect people of all different religions, races, disabilities and ethnic backgrounds.

### Religious Aims:

- RE encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; it encourages them to express their responses.
- To develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other World Religions and to recognise religion as an important expression of human experience
- RE enables pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society.
- To teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- To appreciate moral values such as honesty, liberty, justice, fairness and concern for others
- To investigate and understand the questions and answers that religions can offer about the nature, meaning and purpose of life

## Exemption from Religious Education Lessons

Parents who wish to have their child withdrawn from Religious Education within the curriculum will indicate this on the school enrolment form or through a written letter informing the school of special requirements. Children who are withdrawn from Religious Education will be placed in an alternative class for the duration of the lesson and pursue personal projects.

## Moral Development

Pupils' moral development involves them acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what they believe is right. Education will provide them with the tools that

they need to make these judgments. Moral education will encourage pupils to be able and willing to reflect on the consequences of their actions and to learn how to forgive themselves and others. They develop knowledge, skills and understanding, qualities and attitudes they need in order to make responsible moral decisions and act on them. It is appreciated that different people may hold differing opinions upon what is right or wrong, due to alternative religious or moral beliefs, but the school's *ethos* supports the "rule of law" ( DfE 2013).

Pupils' moral development is addressed throughout the curriculum and in social times within the school. Discussions take place in tutor periods daily and will often address any wrongs or difficult situations that the pupils have observed during the school day or that they have observed via the news or on the internet.

Through observation, staff will assess the development of positive attitudes within a pupil e.g. how the pupil empathises with and understands the beliefs and values of others, and how he/she forms personal judgements.

As religious and moral views are often controversial and involve personal decision and commitment, it would be wrong to assess the personal stances of pupils in relation to such matters. A pupil's view in relation to a moral dilemma will not be assessed as right or wrong, although the process of arriving at that view may be assessed. Staff will record a pupil's strengths and particular needs in the pupil reports to parents.

## Moral Aims

- A developing sense of responsibility not only for their own actions, but for their responsibilities to others
- A developing awareness of, and pride in, their own unique gifts, talents and privileges, and a parallel rejection of all forms of prejudiced perception of others on the basis of class, race, sex, religion or nationality
- An appreciation of the importance of honesty, truthfulness and the development of personal integrity
- An awareness of the feelings, needs and rights of others
- A growing disposition towards generosity by helping those less fortunate or weaker than ourselves
- An appreciation of the importance of being kind to others and a clear rejection of unkindness, cruelty or bullying.

## Social Development

Pupils' social development involves them acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global), and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good. They display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to make an active contribution to all communities.

At CAL students are required to learn their obligations and the responsibilities/constraints that go with joining a 'school family', but also to enjoy the

satisfaction of being part of a thriving and positive community; they understand that all members of the school faculty are individuals, thus different, and should be appreciated as such. Students are given the opportunity to experience a variety of social roles, but are also expected to be role models for each other, and especially younger pupils, as they develop into adulthood. Social development is seen to be closely related to the development of moral principles.

## Social Aims

- To provide opportunities for pupils to work in groups to experience a variety of social roles, leadership, supporting etc.
- To provide opportunities for different age students to experience working co-operatively in partnership
- To provide opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility
- To provide opportunities for pupils to learn to respond to the initiatives of others, and what it means to share a common purpose
- To provide opportunities for pupils to understand the 'political' aspects of living in society
- To provide opportunities for pupils to be involved in a decision-making process, for example decisions regarding boarding; this will involve democratic participation.

## Cultural Development

Pupils' cultural development involves them acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and providing them with opportunities to participate in cultural activities. CAL actively promotes the fundamental British values of “democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs” ( DfE, 2014).

CAL students will acquire a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' ways 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.

A purpose of education at CAL is to develop the pupils' understanding and appreciation of the music, art, drama, poetry, science and technology of the society in which they live. It is, however, appreciated that cultural development is not limited to school and that parents will have a major impact on their child's understanding of the world around them and the historical context of culture.

## Cultural Aims

- To provide pupils with the knowledge of the nature and roots of their own cultural traditions and practices, including historical, social, religious, aesthetic, ethnic or political and also of the key features of other major cultural groups within their own society
- To develop an understanding of the diversity of religious, social, aesthetic, ethnic and political traditions and practices within their society

- To encourage a personal response and accomplishment in a range of cultural fields; these might include literature (both prose and verse); music; technology (including information technology); art and design; and sport.
- To enlarge pupils' capacity to relate what they learn, in school generally and in particular areas of the curriculum, to their appreciation of wider cultural aspects of society, and to evaluate the quality and worth of cultural achievements.

## Achieving the Aims

The moral, spiritual, social and cultural (personal) aspects of a pupil's development do not form part of any separate curriculum area's scheme of work at CAL; they are considered to be a part of the whole school environment. The formation of character, beliefs, and values is really the development of character and personality, and is not something which can be attained by formula, curriculum organization or prescription.

To further its aims, CAL does have a number of more formal structures which are intended to contribute to the general process of moral, spiritual, social and cultural development. These structures support the *ethos* of the school and contribute in many ways towards the development of a spiritual, moral, social and cultural environment.

## The Curriculum

All subjects and all teachers can and do contribute to personal development simply by their interaction with pupils during lessons. However, certain subjects such RE in the middle school, PSHE, Citizenship, Social Skills, Work Skills, English, American Literature, Drama, History/Humanities, and Sport have, by their subject matter, a particular contribution to make.

## Mentoring

All students are allocated a mentor; the mentor will ensure that the students are aware of the timetable, where the class is and break times etc.

## Year Activities

Across the school specific activities take place which are explicitly designed to further personal development.

## Activities

There are a diverse variety of activities which make a major contribution to personal development, including visits to the Theatre, to Art Exhibitions, and PGL.

## Responsibility and Leadership

The system of School Prefects, Mentors, and the School Council provide both formal and informal opportunities for girls and boys to exercise leadership, service and responsibility.

## Specialist Staff

In addition to all teaching staff there are a number of specialist staff – the School

Counsellor, SENCo, Occupational Therapist, Dyslexia Specialist, and Speech and Language Therapists, who have a particular role to play in working closely with individuals to assist them to prepare in diverse ways for the outside world.

## The School Ethos and Rules

There is so much more to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development than just conforming to a set of rules. It is important, however, to have a well regulated and disciplined environment for any educational achievement. CAL has policy documents on the school codes of behaviour that are based on the fundamental tenet of mutual respect, and these together with the Christian ethos of the school (implicitly) are expressions of the values that CAL seeks to encourage. They are considered to be a vital ingredient in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the boys and girls.

## Finally:

At CAL we offer a supportive and nurturing programme and environment for all our students so that they may achieve their full academic potential. We also emphasize education for the whole child in order to instill in our students those values that we believe are needed as they begin to master the essential life skills that their emergence into adulthood will require.

Section 80(1), Education Act 2002<sup>2</sup>

Section 79 (1), School Standards and Framework Act

Signed:



Date: 01/09/17

Principal

Dr Rollo

Signed:



Date: 01/09/17

Head of School

Ms Maddison