 **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development in RE**

The ‘spiritual’ should not be confused with ‘religious’. Spiritual development refers to the aspects of the child’s spirit which are enhanced by school life and learning, and may describe the ‘spirit’ of determination, sharing or open-mindedness. Spiritual development describes the ideal spirit of the school.

**Spiritual** development is promoted in RE through

• **Self-awareness:** offering opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own views and how they have been formed, as well as the views of others

• **Curiosity:** encouraging pupils’ capacity for critical questioning, such as by keeping big questions in a ‘question box’ or as part of a wall display, and allowing time and space where these questions can be addressed to show that they are important

• **Collaboration**: utilising lesson techniques which engender group collaboration and communication such as circle time, debates, circles or group investigations

• **Reflection:** providing a space to reflect on pupils’ own values and views, as well as those of others, and to consider the impact of these values

• **Resilience:** promoting a spirit of open enquiry into emotive or complicated questions, in order to learn how to cope with difficult ideas when they arise in the future

• **Response:** exploring ways in which pupils can express their responses to demanding or controversial issues

• **Values:** promoting an ethos of fairness and mutual respect in the classroom and compassion and generosity in pupils through exploring inspiring examples of these qualities in others

• **Appreciation:** encouraging pupils’ ability to respond with wonder and excitement by exploring some of the marvels and mysteries of the natural world, of human ingenuity, and examples of the capacity of humans to love, create, organise and overcome adversity.

**Moral Development**

Moral development is about exploring and developing pupils’ own moral outlook and understanding of right and wrong. It is also about learning to navigate the fact of moral diversity in the world.

**Moral** development is explored in RE by

* **Valuing others:** in exploring the views of others, young people are well-prepared in RE to appreciate the uniqueness of all humans and their moral value, and to act in the world and towards others accordingly.
* **Moral character development:** RE offers a safe space where pupils can learn from their mistakes, appreciate ideas of right and wrong, continue to strive after setbacks, take the initiative, act responsibly and demonstrate resilience. RE presents pupils with the challenge of responding in real and concrete ways to some of moral questions they face.
* **Moral diversity:** activities in RE lessons can help pupils feel confident when taking part in debates about moral issues. Debates and discussions can prepare pupils for the fact that there will always be disagreement on matters of morality and their right of expression is balanced by a responsibility to listen to the views of others.

**Social Development in RE**

Developing children and young people socially means giving them the opportunities to explore and understand social situations and contexts they may encounter in school or outside.

**Social** development in taught in RE through

• **Shared values:** Children are given opportunities to consider values which are or should be part of society, such as those associated with right and wrong, treatment of others or diversity

• **Idealised concepts:** Children look at topics which require reflection on the abstract concepts our society is built on, such as justice, fairness, honesty and truth, and specific examples of how they affect our common life, such as in relation to how people treat each other in the classroom and school, issues of poverty and wealth, crime and punishment

• **Moral sources:** Pupils are given a chance to reflect on where ideas about how we should behave come from, whether religious or non-religious texts, teachings or traditions, in order to more fully understand social and behavioural norms

• **Influences:** Pupils are given opportunities to explore and reflect on the great influence on individuals of family, friends, the media and wider society, in order to understand how our behaviour is affected for good or ill

• **Social insight**: Pupils acquire insight into significant social and political issues which affect individuals, groups and the nation. For example, such as how churches and gurdwaras may contribute practically to needs in their local communities, or how some religious and non-religious charities fight to change government policies where they are unjust

• **Role models:** Pupils explore role models, from the famous like Desmond Tutu, to the many local examples in the school and its community

• **Experiential learning:** pupils have opportunities to embody for themselves expected behavioural and social norms through class discussions, group work and on-going behaviour expectations, and through special events such as school visits or drama workshops.

**Cultural Development**

Schooling should prepare all young people to participate in Britain’s wider cultural life, whatever their own background.

RE is the perfect subject in which to explore Britain’s rich diversity of religious, ethnic and geographical cultures and promotes children’s understanding of communities and cultural groups, including their own. This wider cultural education prepares children for adulthood in an increasingly diverse world.

**British Values**

RE offers opportunities to build an accurate knowledge-base about religions and beliefs in relation to values. This in turn supports children and young people so that they are able to **move beyond attitudes of tolerance towards increasing respect, so that they can celebrate diversity.**

The RE curriculum focuses learning in the following areas:

**Mutual tolerance** RE can challenge children and young people to not just be tolerant but to be increasingly respectful of race, faith, gender, sexual orientation and age and to celebrate diversity.

**Respectful attitudes** In the RE curriculum, attention focuses on developing mutual respect between those of different faiths and beliefs, promoting an understanding of what a society gains from diversity. Recognition and celebration of human diversity in many forms can flourish where pupils understand different faiths and beliefs, and are challenged to be broad-minded and open-hearted.

**Democracy** In RE, pupils learn the significance of each person’s ideas and experiences through methods of discussion. In debating the fundamental questions of life, pupils learn to respect a range of perspectives. This contributes to learning about democracy, examining the idea that we all share a responsibility to use our voice and influence for the wellbeing of others.

**The rule of law** In RE, pupils examine different examples of codes for human life, including commandments, rules or precepts offered by different religious communities. They learn to appreciate how individuals choose between good and evil, right and wrong, and they learn to apply these ideas to their own communities.

**Individual liberty** In RE, pupils consider questions about identity, belonging and diversity, learning what it means to live a life free from constraints. They study examples of pioneers of human freedom, including those from within different religions, so that they can examine tensions between the value of a stable society and the value of change for human development.