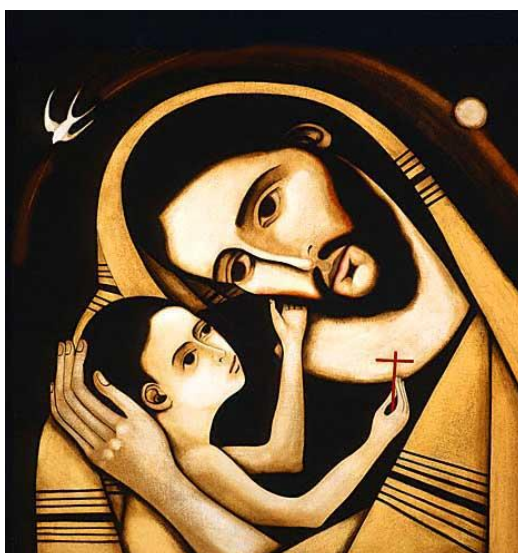




St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Clydach



Moral Development Policy

School Mission Statement

‘Together in Christ – Living, Learning and Growing.’

Moral Development

Introduction

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” – (Romans 12)

Moral development, like Spiritual development cannot be defined by one simple statement. It involves several elements: -

- The will to behave morally as a point of principle. This attitude is fundamental to moral development.
- Knowledge of the codes and conventions of conduct agreed by society – both non-statutory and those prescribed by law.
- Knowledge and understanding of the criteria put forward as a basis for making responsible judgements on moral issues.
- The ability to make judgements on moral issues – as they arise by applying moral principles, insights and reasoning.
- Right of free choice and will.

In order to understand moral development, we first have to question what is morality? Morality is a human endeavour and thus to be human is to be engaged in moral thinking and decision making. As the human person develops, so to does this capacity and the awareness that the individual's actions have consequences for others and for oneself. Individually and collectively, all people are caught up in (even if not implementing) the search for moral integrity and are able to recognise the maxim pointed out by Thomas Aquinas as the heart of the natural law.

“Do good and avoid evil”

This ‘natural law’ is accessible to all people, and each person must respond to it if he/she is to grow. Despite the damage that human beings inflict on one another and on their children, the call to moral growth is inexorable, for it is bound up with the very notion of personhood. It may involve struggle, hardship, self-denial, as well as the joy of sharing with and loving others. No one is outside or excluded either from the search or its fulfilment.

How We Live: - The ‘Way of Jesus’

For Christians, this moral searching takes on new meaning as they recognise the significance of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus for their own lives and listen to His teaching. Gradually, they come to understand that Jesus invited all people freely to share in the divine life itself, to grow with Him to the Father.

“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life” (John 14:6)

Individuals, who accept this invitation, accept Jesus as friend, brother, life-giver. They choose freely to live the Christian way of life. They pursue understanding of this through the Scriptures, through prayer and the sacraments and in the sharing the life of the Christian community. They proclaim their faith through the way that they live.

The Catholic School – called to Fidelity to Christ

Each Catholic school is called to manifest this Christian way of life, both in its teaching and in its day to day life. Only by being truly faithful to his call will a school fulfil its responsibility to assist pupils to know Jesus Christ and understand His message.

The moral life of a Christian proclaims faith, for it is a life which aims always to give witness to Jesus Christ. It may fail many times, for human weakness is great, but in the struggle and recognition of failure and resolution to continue, comes strength, wisdom and growth. The development of the human person, enhanced through suffering and struggle, is focused beyond the self on others and on God. It is guided by the hope which is love and faith, experienced in the community of Christ, His Church. It is school. It is home.

The common realisation that humankind is called to do good and avoid evil means that every individual must become engaged in the appropriation of moral values and the struggle to distinguish the right and good action. This active pursuit of goodness and truth promotes the growth of each person; any denial or turning away from this diminishes both the individual and the community.

Moral consciousness in the context of the Christian life, the ‘Way of Jesus’ is however more than the recognition of rules and principles for correct judgements. It involves the whole inner sense of moral responsibility, the creating of one’s moral self, which is based on the call to discipleship and the command to love God and others as Jesus loved. (John 15:12)

School Life

The standards of behaviour expected by a school are those which reflect its values. It is important that a school establishes those values which determine behaviour throughout the school and particularly in the classroom. “The most effective schools seem to be those that have created a positive atmosphere based on a sense of community and shared values.” (Discipline in Schools – the Elton Report 1989)

Children are more likely to behave responsibly, if they are given responsibility. But this can only be really effective in a community which gives that responsibility within a framework of clearly stated boundaries of acceptable behaviour, and where members of staff respond firmly and promptly to pupils who exceed those boundaries.

Values are inherent in teaching. Teachers are by the nature of their profession 'moral agents', who imply values by the way they address pupils and each other, the way they dress, the language they use and the effort they put into their work.

Values lie at the heart of the school's vision of itself as a community. Procedures for giving praise, appointing prefects, rewarding and punishing, all give messages about what qualities are valued. Policies about admissions, especially regarding children with special needs, are equally indicative of values.

Developing a statement of values is not simply a process aimed at producing glossy documentation. It is an essential and honest statement about the school and what it stands for. While many schools share common values, they will differ in others and those differences are critical in affecting parental choice.

The most important point about a statement of values is that it should be implemented – that it must be seen to be effective. Perhaps the most difficult task for schools is ensuring that its values truly underpin expectations and rules, and that they are taken seriously by all members of the community. The fact that some aspects of the statement should be kept permanently under review will automatically involve new members in deliberations.

Use of praise rather than punishment, reward not sanctions.

How Our School Promotes Spiritual and Moral Development

There are three areas of school life in which opportunities arise for moral development. They are the ethos of the school, all subjects of the curriculum and collective worship.

The ethos of the school reflects the values and attitudes which characterise the community, the atmosphere of the school, the quality of relationships and the way in which the school helps pupils to deal with conflict, loss, grief or difficulties. The ethos of the school reflects the values which the community intends to promote. These values determine behaviour throughout the school and particularly in the classroom. Every school claims to value academic excellence and achievement of potential. Therefore expectations governing classroom behaviour should be directed towards provision of a positive working environment. Probably all schools state that it is their aim to develop in young people a sense of

respect for others, regardless of race or creed, this we believe to be true and active at St. Joseph's.

The knowledge and understanding essential to moral development, and the ability to make responsible and reasoned judgements, should be developed through all subjects of the curriculum. In most aspects of the curriculum, pupils should encounter questions about the origins of the universe, the purpose of life, the nature of proof, the uniqueness of humanity and the meaning of truth, the right and wrong way to live and treat others. The following of simple class rules devised by teachers and pupils, helps to develop a sense of community and to appreciate the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them. Collective worship also offers an opportunity to reaffirm, interpret and put into practice the values of the school. It provides a time to celebrate the various achievements of members of the community that are held to be of worth.

At St. Joseph's

"God who has loving concern for everyone has willed that all people should constitute one family and treat one another in a spirit of family Love."

Christians "are called to be witnesses to Christ in all things in the midst of human society." (Vatican II Gaudium et Spes (24) & (43))

At St. Joseph's there are several values that we aim to promote for both adults and children alike. These values include: -

- Telling the truth
- Reconciliation
- Keeping promises
- Respecting the rights and property of others
- Acting considerately towards others
- Helping those less fortunate and weaker than ourselves
- Taking personal responsibility for one's actions
- Enforcing dignity for all
- Ensuring praise is awarded
- Self discipline

We also aim to discourage and reject certain values such as: _

- Bullying
- Cheating
- Deceit
- Cruelty
- Irresponsibility
- Dishonesty

We aim to guide children and encourage them to make their own decisions regarding right and wrong. Therefore they should grow up, knowing which things are acceptable and which are not. Young people will inevitably question why things are as they are, and will test the

boundaries as did previous generations. But there need to be boundaries/ some form of value system which provides the help and support to enable children to come to their own judgement.

They should be encouraged to reflect on the possibility of certainty, and to question the often exaggerated view of the infallibility of science as the only means of understanding the world, and the equally exaggerated view of the inadequacy of religion and philosophy. Moral issues will arise, for example, in science (issues of life and death), geography (environmental issues) and history (development of tolerance). In religious education, we not only look at Christian, but at the role and laws of other religions around the world.

Religious Education has a particular part to play in pupils' moral development. Most agreed syllabi require pupils to be challenged by the ultimate questions of life and death such as "Who am I?" "What's wrong?" "What's the remedy?" "Are there absolutes of right and wrong?" Pupils should be encouraged to address such questions elsewhere in the curriculum, but it is in Religious Education where they should be explicitly required to do so if it arises. They must be free to respond to such questions or not, and their responses cannot be predetermined. However informed responses to such questions can only be in the light of knowledge and understanding of the wisdom of others. Pupils should be challenged by hearing the claims to truth offered by people with a different religious or philosophical perspective of life and compare with the rules and laws of our Christian beliefs.

The moral development of pupils implies the need for a variety of learning experiences which provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Discuss matters of personal concern
- Develop a sense of belonging to a community
- Develop relationships with adults and peers
- Be challenged by exploring the beliefs and values of others, while deepening their knowledge and understanding of their own faith or beliefs
- Discuss religious and philosophical questions
- Understand why people reach certain decisions on moral issues and how those decisions affect their lives
- Experience what is aesthetically challenging and pleasing
- Experience silence and reflection on the difference between good and evil / right or wrong

Collective worship should offer pupils opportunities to explore and share beliefs; consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence; consider the relevance of ideas and beliefs to their own lives; think about the needs of others and develop an understanding of right and wrong / good and evil, working towards a life of uniqueness with Jesus.

At St. Joseph's we are aware of the many challenges children and adults have in their lives and have discussed the severity of these and how it

affects our relationships with each other. We also aim to discourage all the issues that harm us.

What Harms Us

Hatred	Denigration
Cynicism	Derision
Mistrust	Indifference
Blame	Contempt
Coldness	Gossip
Abuse	Pornography
Cruelty	Irresponsibility
Racism	Humiliation
Apathy	Destruction
Promiscuity	Disregard
Covetousness	Blasphemy
Vandalism	Consumerism
Greed	Pride
Sacrilege	Disloyalty
Dishonour	Dishonesty

Throughout the child's life at St. Joseph's he/she will be morally educated to enable them as young adults to:

- Distinguish between right and wrong
- Articulate their own attitudes and values
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Recognise the moral dimension to a situation
- Understand the long and short term consequences of their actions for themselves and others
- Develop for themselves a set of socially acceptable values and principles and set guidelines to govern their own behaviour
- Recognise that their values and attitude may have to change over time
- Behave consistently in accordance with their principles.

Parents, teachers, Governors

"In advocating moral values, a teacher or governor is bound to be presenting a vision of human life. The effectiveness of any moral teaching depends on whether the person, by the way he/she strives to live, exemplify the values being taught. In the eyes of young people, witness teaches more effectively than words."

(Cardinal Hume: Annual Conference of Secondary Headteachers 1992)

In order to plan effectively for Christian Moral Education, staff and governors will need to have a shared understanding of what this means, how it relates to the Mission Statement and policies of the school and their respective responsibilities in assembling and implementing a comprehensive and selective programme.

In St. Joseph's we will provide opportunity to apply the above principles in all subjects of the curriculum. As a staff we will work to a whole school programme of Christian ethics.

"To help one person to grow is to help build the world" (Grail Motto)

We realise that human beings can promote and encourage growth, or they can hurt and diminish one another. We will discourage the children and each other from hurting others. We will not: -

- Rob people or their respect and dignity
- Destroy trust
- Harm the community
- Diminish our own personhood

Daily we should reflect upon the characteristics that enable us to grow and to destroy any harmful elements. To aid this a simple check list has been devised:

What Assists Us to Grow

Love	Equality
Encouragement	Honour
Commitment	Trust
Vocation	Honesty
Hope	Praise
Welcome	Integrity
Enthusiasm	Acceptance
Tolerance	Generosity
Fidelity	Faithfulness
Unselfishness	Stewardship
Self Sacrifice	kindliness
Harmony	Respect
Generosity	Sharing
Piety	humility
Charity	Warmth

And "the greatest of all these is love" (John)

At St. Joseph's we are trying to enforce the most important rule or commandment of all in both the children and the adults.

Jesus said to his friends "to love one another as I have loved you" (John)

Conclusion

As members of Christ's Body, we have the assurance of Jesus, that the Spirit will guide His church in love and truth. Its teaching authority, understood, not as power but as loving service, thus makes possible through its spirit-guided teaching ministry, ever deepening understanding of the Christian life, the Way of Jesus'.

The way to morality and thus the way of Jesus means: -

- Protecting life
- Promoting life
- Nurturing life

“I have come so that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10)

Literacy and Numeracy Framework

The Literacy and Numeracy Framework will enable literacy and numeracy skills to be embedded in all subjects across the curriculum rather than focused on English, Welsh and Maths lessons alone. The Foundation Phase places great importance on literacy and numeracy. In the Foundation Phase children are introduced to early literacy through real context learning in a print rich environment. The Framework will allow all teachers and early years practitioners to monitor pupils' progress against year on year expectations for literacy and help schools and identify how best to challenge and support all of their learners. The Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) establishes national expectations for pupils' learning. Assessing Literacy and Numeracy is tracked through the introduction of National Reading and Numeracy Tests for all learners from Years 2 to 9. The LNF is a statutory requirement from September 2013, with formal assessment against the LNF becoming a requirement from September 2014.

Structure of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework

Component	Strand	Element	Aspects
Literacy	Oracy across the curriculum	Developing and presenting information and ideas	Speaking Listening Collaboration and discussion
	Reading across the curriculum	Locating, selecting and using information. Responding to what has been read.	Reading strategies. Comprehension Response and Analysis.
	Writing across the curriculum	Organising ideas and information.	Meaning, purpose, readers. Structure & organisation.

		Writing accurately.	Language Handwriting, grammar, punctuation, spelling.
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Numeracy

Component	Strand	Element
Numeracy	Developing numerical reasoning	Processes and Connections Represent & communicate Review
Numeracy	Using number skills	Use number facts Fractions, decimals, percentage and ratio. Calculate using written methods and mental methods
	Using reasoning skills	Length, weight, mass & capacity Time Temperature Area & volume Angle and position
	Using data skills	Collect and record data Present and analyse data Interpret results.

Child Protection - The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

is at the heart of our school's planning, policies, practice and ethos.

As a rights- respecting school we not only teach about children's rights but also model rights and respect in all relationships – Linked to Articles 3, 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 30, 34, 36, 39, 42 (CRC)

