

Appendix 11

Early in 2009 QCA produced some guidance on spiritual development.¹ It includes the principles of good practice as laid out below.

Principles of good practice

Spiritual and moral development is at the heart of community life and building a community. This relates to the school's ethos as well as how children learn. The following principles of good practice can apply to all the professionals working in an extended school, all those with a relationship with the school, and to governors. The principles are a shared responsibility and work best when all staff, parents and other stakeholders understand and accept them.

1. Think process, not product

The spiritual and moral dimension will develop best in young people when the school engages them in a learning process. Schools do not need to worry about finding all the answers, or producing spiritually and morally perfect people. Instead, schools can focus on providing experiences which young people can use in their own growth. For young people, what makes the difference is the experience of having opportunities for discovery, enquiry, reflection, expression and discussion. A study of other people's experiences can be useful as a stimulus.

2. Build and maintain stakeholder support

Responsibility for spiritual and moral development is best shared by all the professionals working in an extended school, and all those with a relationship with the school. It is particularly important that the senior leadership team and governors have a good understanding of, and commitment to, the school's approach. Parents are entitled to clear information about the school's approach. Schools will wish to reassure parents, whatever their views, that learning about spirituality and morality is an opportunity, not a threat.

3. Promote wellbeing

There are many profound connections between spirituality, morality and wellbeing. Schools are most likely to succeed when they incorporate spiritual and moral aspects of learning alongside:

- the five outcomes of Every Child Matters
- emotional health and personal wellbeing
- health education
- healthy school status
- social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL)
- personal, learning and thinking skills
- curriculum dimensions.

4. See connections within and across the whole curriculum

Every part of the curriculum has the potential to be personally relevant to the learner and to yield opportunities for spiritual and moral aspects of learning. Whatever the subject matter is, ask questions about it, explore connections with other subjects and reflect on the significance it has for pupils' lives. Each subject Importance Statement can be a useful place to start planning.

5. Be open to diversity

There is no single path or stance for spiritual and moral development. All schools have a responsibility to promote community cohesion. All schools can contribute to fostering reflective, generous-spirited and globally aware young people who can acknowledge and respect diverse ideas.

16 The web address for downloading it is incredibly complicated (see Appendix 12) - best to go to QCA - www.qca.org.uk and then do a search for spiritual and moral development.

6. Listen to children's questions and narratives

Many good opportunities for reflection come about when young people ask questions or share their experiences. It is important to give young people time for reflection. The adult's role in this context can be to listen, and to encourage other pupils to see the importance of the question or contribution, as well as eliciting responses.

7. Use professional judgement

Every professional working with children needs to form his/her own professional judgement about professional boundaries with regard to spiritual and moral issues. There may be times when the appropriate response is to share some personal beliefs or experiences, but at no time should it be obligatory or a right to do so.

8. Be clear about what a successful process looks like

From the start, schools are more likely to be successful in providing good opportunities if they take time to be clear about how they will measure successful provision for spiritual and moral development. The range of opportunities offered across the curriculum can be improved by feedback received through pupil voice, parental and stakeholder opinion, lesson observation and staff comment.

