SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Durham High School for Girls is a Church of England Foundation and the Governors take seriously the vision to be a Christian school. The spiritual and moral development of each pupil is therefore central to the school's aims; the school aims to be a community based on Christian values where every individual counts and regards as a priority the development of the potential of each pupil.

The school welcomes pupils of all faiths and none and every girl is expected to participate fully in the spiritual life and education of the school. Girls of faiths other than Christian are encouraged to grow in their own faith as well as understand the Christian principles on which the school is founded.

The school has close links with the Diocese of Durham and Durham Cathedral.

Collective worship

Collective worship plays a vital part in pupils' spiritual development and provides opportunities for them to learn about and experience Christian worship. It also develops a sense of community within the school and of being part of a wider national and global community.

Assembly takes place every day in both Junior and Senior House except on Friday in Junior House when they have a hymn practice and on Thursday in Senior House when girls have a tutorial session. Attendance is compulsory for all girls and teaching staff.

Assemblies are usually conducted by senior staff or visitors, though girls take part on a regular basis. In Senior House every Form is required to organise and lead at least one assembly a year. In Junior House, each Form conducts an assembly annually to which parents are invited.

Recently, classroom assemblies have been introduced in Senior House. These are usually led by pupils and are often based on material supplied by the Chaplain.

In Senior House there is a half-termly optional Communion Service which runs alongside assembly. Girls in Year 6 attend two of these before they enter the Senior School. Pupils take part in the service, leading prayers and reading lessons. There are also special Communion Services organised for and by different year groups. Both Year 6 and Year 7 have had their own Communion Services which they have planned and taken part in. There is also an annual Communion Service which is attended by the whole of the senior school and at which those girls Confirmed through school, and any others baptised or

Confirmed at their own local churches throughout the year, speak about the reasons for their decisions.

Each term there is a major worship service; the Christmas Carol Service is held in the Cathedral and is attended by all girls from Year 3; Junior House and Senior House have their separate St Cuthbert's Day services in the Spring Term and all the senior school attend the Leavers' Service in St Oswald's Church.

The Quiet Room in the Hurworth Building provides the opportunity for any girl who wishes, to pray in private or in a group outside the normal context of assemblies. This is a resource for all pupils of all faiths and none to worship or simply be quiet.

Opportunities for Spiritual development

In addition to the provision within the RE scheme of work all departments are required in their schemes of work to ensure that the spiritual life and ethical dimension of a topic is embraced.

Confirmation classes are offered in school to girls of Year 8 and above and girls are usually confirmed with candidates from the Durham churches in the deanery.

Five Christian groups exist for girls through Years 5 to 13. These meet weekly for discussion, to listen to a visiting speaker or to explore and experience worship creatively.

The Chaplain organises weekends away regularly for different sections of the school.

Art, music and drama play an important part in the school curriculum and these departments (in addition to RE and PSHE) are particularly conscious of their role in promoting spiritual development.

Moral Development

Moral education is seen as inextricably linked to spiritual development. Girls' awareness of duties to each other and the local and wider community is consciously developed through the tutorial and PSHE programme, as well as in assemblies, RE and the schemes of work of each department.

The school is very aware that value education takes place as much through the hidden as the formal curriculum and staff are conscious of their role in upholding Christian values in every aspect of school life.

Great emphasis is also placed on service to the community through the charity efforts of each Form, visiting speakers and the various voluntary service activities (see below) like the Year 10 visit to Sherburn House, the Age Concern party and the Duke of Edinburgh award. There is also a requirement whereby all members of the Sixth Form are expected to be involved in some part of a community project.

Other opportunities for spiritual and moral development

The girls also have a chance to develop spiritually and morally in their contact both within the school community and with the wider community

1. through the 'Buddy' system helping younger girls with reading and maths within school
2. through their voluntary contribution in the monthly family services at the school
3. through community engagement and involvement with the numerous voluntary service activities including: Age Concern party, visiting elderly people in Sherburn House, helping with primary school based projects, including: Minimus, Science Sparks and the Year 5 Outreach programme.
4. In Sixth Form there is an annual visit to Lesotho educating against HIV and working with orphans.
5. From Year 10 girls can take part in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme