



Durham High School

Spiritual and Moral Development Policy

This policy applies to the Whole School
and is published to parents and pupils

Reviewed: September 2022
Next review: September 2023

This policy should be read in conjunction with: Pastoral Care Policy and the RSHE and PSHCCE Policy.

Durham High School is a Church of England Foundation and the Governors take seriously the vision of being 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 that upholds Christian principles, to be a place where every member of the community is valued and where developing the potential of each pupil in mind, body and spirit is a priority.

The School welcomes pupils of all faiths and none. Every pupil is expected to participate fully in the spiritual life and education of the School. Pupils of faiths other than Christianity, or of no faith, are encouraged to grow in understanding their own beliefs as well as understanding the Christian principles and faith on which the School is founded. We aim to give pupils the ability to think about their own spiritual and moral decisions from their own faith perspective as well as considering the perspective of others.

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. Collective worship also develops a sense of community within the School and of being part of a wider national and global community.

Pre-Prep and Prep Departments

Our assemblies, which include reflection time, are an important feature at DHS for the 3-11 age phase. They act as one of the main ways by which we come together as an entire school community, create our positive reflective ethos and promote our values-based education which has at its foundation the Fundamental British Values and supports many elements of the PSHCCE curriculum.

Assemblies contain times of quiet reflection that enable pupils to develop learning of values and appreciate aspirations. They often serve to develop our positive school ethos that affirms the school's identity and aspirations. The result being that that the school hosts whole school assemblies where children and young people come together to celebrate, share and reflect on school life and achievements, the local community and global dimensions. The benefits of assemblies to both the children and the staff at our school are enormous.

Services

At Christmas pupils from Years 3 - 6 attend the Carol Service in Durham Cathedral (together with the whole of Senior Department and Sixth Form). Staff who attend are required to wear gowns and hoods.

Senior Department and Sixth Form

Senior Department and Sixth Form have an Assembly on a Friday morning which is very important to the life of Durham High School and all full-time staff and pupils are required to attend. Part-time staff should attend if they are in school. We have a yearly Assembly Calendar which outlines the diverse and inclusive themes covered.

In addition to the Friday Assembly, each year group from 7-13, have a Year Group/ Section Assembly each week. This is led by the Head of Year or Head of Key Stage.

Every form is required to lead at least one assembly per year, usually on a Friday, which should be written by the pupils (not form staff). Please give the script to the Assistant Principal with responsibility for Pastoral Care one week beforehand. If you need any help, we have books in the Library.

Content and Resources:

Assembly takes place on Friday in the main hall from 8.45-9.05am or on a designated day for a Section/ Year Group Assembly.

Assemblies should last about 10-15 minutes and always have spiritual or moral content, including time for reflection and prayer(s). Our normal practice is to also have a hymn and a Bible reading or similar source of wisdom, e.g., teachings of a church or saint or reflections from a religious leader from a different Faith. Circumstances sometimes mean that a hymn is not possible.

Holy Communion Services

Once every half term, there is a voluntary, informal, Holy Communion service which runs alongside a Hymn Practice finishing at 9.10am. All members of Senior Department and Sixth Form are warmly invited to attend. A Vicar from St Oswald's Parish Church leads the service and pupils help with readings and prayers. First lesson starts a little later on these occasions and the parallel assembly (often a hymn practice) is longer. Pre-Prep and Prep pupils and staff sometimes attend. All non-teaching staff are welcome to attend, but should organise suitable cover if needed.

Senior Department and Sixth Form Services

At Christmas the whole of the Senior Department and Sixth Form attend our Carol Service in Durham Cathedral. In the summer term we have our Leavers' Service at St Oswald's Parish Church when usually only Year 11 – U6 attend. Staff who attend are required to wear gowns and hoods.

Staff Services

At the beginning of every term we have a staff service, usually in the morning of the INSET day. There are also occasional opportunities for informal staff prayers or communion services in the Quiet Room.

Christian Union

Christian groups meet at lunchtimes as part of the extra-curricular timetable. They are available for Years 3-13 and include a packed lunch, where necessary. Some staff and volunteers from local churches or theological colleges work to lead these groups.

Support

DHS has links with a number of Faith Leaders who can spiritually support Staff, pupils and their families. People of any faith or none are welcome to receive support. Sometimes it is helpful to have someone to talk to, or someone to ask for prayer, or someone to pray with. Support from Faith Leaders can happen alongside pastoral care given elsewhere in the school. We currently have links with the Islamic Diversity Centre and the University Muslim Chaplin, A Buddhist Leader, Catholic Priest and Sikh Leader. During religious festivals, the Faith Leaders deliver Assemblies and raise awareness of their Faith.

Quiet Room

We also encourage pupils to be reflective and find space in their busy lives. This can be spiritually refreshing and improve pupils' resilience to the ups and downs of life. The Quiet

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

Further 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.
- Several Christian groups are run for pupils throughout Years 3 to 13. These meet for discussion, games and activities, time to reflect, to explore and experience faith and worship together. All students are welcome and we sometimes have helpers from different church denominations.
- Curriculum subjects all play an important part in the School curriculum and these departments (in addition to RE and PSHCCE) are particularly conscious of their role in promoting spiritual development.

Moral Development

Moral education is seen as inextricably linked to spiritual development. Pupils' awareness of duties to each other and the local and wider community is consciously developed through the tutorial and PSHCCE programme (which incorporates learning about the Fundamental British Values), as well as in assemblies, RE and subject schemes of work. School is very aware that education about values 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 Class and the School as a whole, through:

- Charities Committee. This is run as an Interact Club, supported by the Rotary Foundation. This enables us to extend opportunities for direct community and international action as well as in fundraising.
- Visiting speakers and the various voluntary service activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme;
- Events like the Pre-Prep and Prep Departments Bake Off and sponsored walks, which also provide opportunities to care for our local and global community;
- Overseas trips, providing opportunities to experience life of those in other parts of the world and support those in need in the global community, for example the Sports Tours to Barbados and Sri Lanka and Sixth Form trips to Vietnam and Malawi, both of which had a social action dimension.
- Eco Council where each form has a representative and a voice to make a difference in our environment and our world. As a Team, the pupils have been awarded their Green Flag. They are now working towards the next level of their Eco Award. We Sponsor an animal each year through funds we have raised.

Other Opportunities for Spiritual and Moral Development

The pupils have other opportunities to develop spiritually and morally in their contact both within the School and the wider community: through the 'Buddy' system, helping younger pupils with reading and Maths within School; and through community engagement and involvement with the numerous voluntary service activities including helping with primary school based projects, for example, Minimus, Science Sparks and the Year 5 Outreach Programme.