

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MINUTES of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 10 March 2015.

PRESENT: Mr S C Manion (Chairman), Mrs N Younosi (Vice-Chairman), Ms K Burke, Mrs N Caisley, Mr W Chambers, Rabbi C Cohen, Mrs V Corbyn, Mrs A Donnelly, Mr J Elenor, Mrs J Grant, Ms F Hawkes, Mr T A Maddison, Miss S Malone, Mrs E May, Mrs B Naden, Mr M J Northey, Mr M Papadopoulos, Mrs N Paterson, Mr R Tyson, Miss R Walters and Miss J Webb

ALSO PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss L Adam (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Mr A Foster (Consultant Advisor)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

53. Membership *(Item 1)*

- (1) The Members noted the resignation of Mr Platnauer – Group 3 (NUT).
- (2) The Members noted the appointment of Ms Hawkes, Head of RE, Philosophy and Ethics, Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys to Group 1 (Roman Catholic) and Mr Chambers, NUT Representative to Group 3 (NUT).

54. Declarations of Interest

- (1) Mrs Younosi reported that the Persian New Year was being celebrated on 21 March 2015 by Baha'i and Muslims.

55. Minutes - 25 November 2014 *(Item 4)*

- (1) Mrs Naden requested that the Minutes be amended to reflect the fact that she had volunteered to be on the Youth SACRE Working Group instead of the Shaping the Spirit Working Group.
- (2) Mrs Donnelly requested that the Minutes be amended in 47.3 from 'there' to 'their'.
- (3) Rabbi Cohen requested that the Minutes be amended in 43.3 from 'Judiasm' to 'Judaism'.

- (4) The Members agreed that, subject to these changes being made, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 November 2014 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

56. SACRE Budget as at Dec 2014

(Item 5)

- (1) Mr Foster advised that an amended version of the Budget had been distributed to Members. He reported that SACRE had spent 69% of its 2014/15 budget. He explained that any budget remaining could not be rolled forward into the new financial year. He was expecting some additional expenses for the SACRE meeting and the NASACRE Conference to be claimed. He explained that invoices for the St Botolph's School and Oakwood Grammar School's Quality Mark and the RE Hub Training Meetings had not been finalised.
- (2) Mrs Paterson stated that the RE Hub invoice would be sent directly to the Clerk. She noted that she was happy to send a letter to the County Council asking for the budget to be rolled over into the new financial year. Mr Foster explained that the County Council did not allow any remaining budget to be rolled forward into the new financial year. The Chairman stated it was more important to protect the budget for future years to enable SACRE to implement new projects such as Youth SACRE.
- (3) Mrs Corbyn enquired about the £700 invoice for Youth SACRE. Mr Foster explained that it could not be taken out of the 2014/15 budget as it was for an event being held in the next financial year. He stated that the SACRE budget was in a good position; he had received an indication from the Finance Department that SACRE would receive the same allocation of £5000 in 2015/16.
- (4) Mr Elenor asked about the Kent SACRE budget in comparison with other local authorities. The Chairman reported that, following conversations at the NASACRE, he had found that the Kent SACRE was very well supported by the County Council in comparison to other local authorities. Mr Elenor stated that he found the Hampshire SACRE's syllabus very impressive. Mr Foster explained that when the Kent SACRE reviews its syllabus, additional funding may need to be requested. He reported that the last Kent syllabus had cost £15,000 to produce hard copies. He noted that the new syllabus would only be published online but explained that there would still be cost implications. He stated that in the NASACRE survey about funding, Kent had one of the highest budgets; in addition to the £5000 budget, the County Council covered the costs of his role for a set number of days throughout the year.
- (5) Mr Maddison enquired about the amount of additional expenses which would come out of the 2014/15 budget. Mr Foster explained that he expected another £1000 to come out of the budget.

57. 2015 Secondary Youth SACRE

(Item 6)

- (1) The Chairman invited Mrs Grant to provide an update on the 2015 Secondary Youth SACRE event. Mrs Grant began by stating that the 2014 Youth SACRE

had been very successful, the students who had attended provided positive feedback about the event. She had invited Lat Blaylock to facilitate the 2015 event but had not received a response.

- (2) Members expressed concerns about the lack of aims and objectives for Secondary Youth SACRE events. Members recognised that, whilst the 2014 Youth SACRE had been beneficial to students and had promoted SACRE, the Kent SACRE had gained very little from the event. The 2014 event had been viewed as a conference rather than an opportunity for young people to input their views on RE and the syllabus to SACRE. It was also felt that the event had not been cost effective as the facilitator was very expensive per head. It was stated that it was difficult to release students and teachers from school to attend events due to timetable pressures.
- (3) A number of proposals, designed to provide an opportunity for young people to input their views on RE and the syllabus directly to SACRE, were suggested for SACRE's future engagement with young people:
 - Asking the Kent Youth County Council or sub group to form the Youth SACRE;
 - Forming a virtual Youth SACRE through the use of online surveys, Twitter chats and Skype;
 - Encouraging School Councils to discuss the RE syllabus as part of their meetings.
- (4) There was support amongst Members to continue with the conference planned for 2015. A number of proposals were suggested to improve the 2015 conference:
 - Grouping schools together and hosting local conferences with local facilitators;
 - Webcasting the conference from County Hall;
 - Charging a deposit for a place, which would be returned if attended, to promote attendance.
- (5) At the end of the Members' deliberations, the Chairman stated that SACRE would continue to proceed with a conference for secondary schools and look to engage with students through school councils.

58. 2015 Primary Youth SACRE

- (1) The Chairman invited Mrs Corbyn to provide an update on the 2015 Primary Youth SACRE event. Mrs Corbyn began by stating that the event 'Knowing You, Knowing Me' was based on a conference model and was taking place at Canterbury Christ Church University to give the students an experience of a university campus. The event would start with a lecture; she noted there would be an opportunity to gain feedback from students about their likes and dislikes about RE using post-it notes. The students would then split into two groups; half would take part in a reflection workshop led by Canterbury Christ Church University students and half would meet a representative of a faith different to their own. After lunch, the two groups would swap and participate in the other

workshop. She reported that there had been 210 applications for 150 places; a waiting list had been implemented.

- (2) Mrs Donnelly enquired about the cost of the event. Mrs Corbyn explained that the venue was provided for free but SACRE was required to use the university's catering for the event. She stated that the budget was £750.
- (3) Mrs Younosi enquired about the representation of faith groups. Mrs Corbyn explained that there would be Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist and Christian representatives at the event. She stated that Mr Gillespie had sourced local people from Canterbury with suitable skills to facilitate a workshop with young people.

59. Shaping the Spirit - Working Group Update

(Item 7)

- (1) Mr Foster reported that the working group met in early February to revise the Shaping the Spirit document following the publication of new guidance from the Department of Education on SMSC and British Values. He noted that the previous document was out of date and contained expired links.
- (2) Mr Foster stated that the Working Group looked at the new guidance and developed a briefing paper at the meeting. He stated that he had sent the briefing paper to the working group and had received no comments.
- (3) Mrs Paterson enquired when the briefing paper was distributed. Mr Foster explained it was circulated to the working group on 14 February. He stated that he would send the briefing paper to all Members via the Clerk.
- (4) Ms Hawkes enquired about the distribution of the Shaping the Spirit document to schools. Mr Foster explained that a link would be sent to all schools and put on the County Council's website. Ms Hawkes advised that she had recently attended an Ofsted Conference and had additional information which could be included in the document. Mr Foster asked her to send him the information as soon as possible.

60. Development Plan

(Item 8)

- (1) Mr Foster presented the revised Development Plan. He stated that Members' comments from the previous meeting had been taken into account and he advised that the following new points had been added:
 - Review of Agreed Syllabus for implementation in September 2017
 - Develop plan for establishing Agreed Syllabus Conference
 - Set out timeframe for review process
 - Development of SMSC Guidance for schools
 - Briefing meetings for Youth SACRE Conferences
- (2) Mrs Caisley enquired about the Agreed Syllabus Conference. Mr Foster explained that the Agreed Syllabus Conference was the formal body appointed to agree the new syllabus. He stated that SACRE determined the membership

of the Conference; SACRE members, teachers, students and academics had been invited to be members of the Conference for previous syllabus reviews.

- (3) Mr Foster explained that SACRE had a legal duty to review the Agreed Syllabus within five years of the previous review. He recommended that the Agreed Syllabus Conference be established in the summer term to enable it to start work in September 2015. He reported that the syllabus would need to be completed by spring 2017 to enable it to be implemented by schools in September 2017.
- (4) Mrs Corbyn stated the importance of having a realistic and manageable timetable to enable the Agreed Syllabus Conference to gather young people's views. Mrs Burke, Mrs Caisley and Mrs Donnelly stressed the importance of collecting meaningful data from the students at the Secondary Youth SACRE Conference in autumn 2015. Mrs Caisley stated there needed to be early engagement with primary students.
- (5) Mr Foster highlighted the 2014 RE Curriculum Review; he suggested that Members may wish to use it to develop the new syllabus. Miss Walters suggested having the RE Curriculum Review paper as a substantial item on the next agenda to enable the Members to discuss and come to a consensus about its usefulness for the new review.
- (6) In response to a specific question by Mr Maddison about changing the syllabus, Mr Foster explained that it was time for a drastic change. He believed that SACRE could utilise the RE Curriculum Review to identify gaps in the current syllabus and enable SACRE to develop its new syllabus. He noted that there was no scheduled speaker for the next meeting which would enable a significant discussion on RE Curriculum Review paper.
- (7) Ms Hawkes enquired if new levels set by every school would be a factor included in the new syllabus. Mr Foster stated that this would be the case.

61. Overview of National and Local Developments

(Item 9)

- (1) NASACRE - The Trojan Horse Aftermath Conference, Friday 20 March 2015, London. Keynote Speakers: Joyce Miller and Alan Brine.
 - (a) Mr Foster reported that NASACRE was rerunning the Trojan Horse Conference in St Albans; the Chairman and Mr Foster were due to attend. The Chairman explained that he may not be able to attend due to a work commitment and asked if any of the Members would be able to take his place. Miss Walters stated that she was able to attend but thought that it may be useful for a teacher to attend. Ms Hawkes reported that she may be able to attend and would let Miss Walters and the Clerk know.
- (2) NASACRE AGM and Executive Elections, Thursday 21 May 2015, The Council House, Birmingham. Keynote Speaker: Charles Clarke, Professor of Politics at University of East Anglia.

- (a) Mr Foster stated that the Chairman and Mrs Younosi would be attending the NASACRE AGM.
- (3) Schools access to SACRE members
- (a) Mrs Younosi explained that SACRE faith group representatives should be used as a resource; they were able to answer questions about the faith they represented. She stated that the most appropriate way for schools to contact the faith representatives was by email via the Clerk.
 - (b) Mr Papadopoulos enquired if he could take his Priest with him on school visits. Mr Foster advised that this would be appropriate.
 - (c) Rabbi Cohen reported that he was inundated with requests to visit schools. He stated he was unable to cover the whole county and only accepted requests in East Kent. He stated that he had previously produced a 45 minute educational DVD about a visit to a synagogue which could be shared with schools. The Chairman suggested that the video could be shared on You Tube. Mrs Paterson advised that many primary schools were unable to access to You Tube.
 - (d) Mrs Corbyn raised child protection concerns about SACRE endorsing individuals for school visits. Mr Foster explained that it was not for SACRE to recommended individuals to schools; it was for schools to get recommendations from other schools.
- (4) Kent SACRE Survey Summary 2014 Report
- (a) Mr Foster gave a brief summary of the Kent SACRE 2014 Survey. He stated that there was a similar response rate to previous years; very few secondary schools had responded. He reported that the key issues were collective worships, KS4, lack of CPD and non-specialist teachers teaching the subject. All schools stated that they complied with the legal requirement to provide a daily act of Collective Worship and planned their RE teaching using the Kent Syllabus. He stated that he was reluctant to send out a paper survey again, he would investigate options for an electronic survey.
- (5) Department of Education Consultation
- (a) Mr Foster explained that he received an email on 19 December from Sue Rogers and David Blackburn asking him to provide a response, on behalf of SACRE, to the Department of Education's consultation on the new examinations. The deadline for submissions was 3 January 2015; in order for it to be signed off by Patrick Leeson before the deadline, the SACRE response was submitted on 22 December.
 - (b) Mrs Burke noted that the Government had published its response to the consultation. She highlighted that the Government had decided to separate the philosophy of religion and ethics into two distinct areas of study and rejected the inclusion of non-religious worldviews such as humanism and atheism.
- (6) Lord Nash letter 7/1/2015

- (a) Mr Foster explained that Lord Nash, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools, had written to all SACRES to encourage them to consider ways the locally agreed syllabus could help pupils to develop an understanding of Christianity, whilst also learning about the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. He noted that NASACRE had advised SACREs to respond individually.
 - (b) Mrs Donnelly suggested that the Kent SACRE should write to all schools to ask them to promote voting in the General Election as part of supporting British values. A number of Members highlighted different ways voting was encouraged within schools.
- (7) Annual Report Update: Education and Young People's Services (EYPS) Cabinet Committee. 16 December 2014.
- (a) Mr Foster reported that the Committee had welcomed the report but was disappointed to hear that there had been no response from the Secretary of State to Mr Gough's letter. The Committee had suggested that KCC write to Sir Michael Wilshaw (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools) regarding the issue of RE being part of the Ofsted inspection.
 - (b) Mr Foster stated the report was presented to the Committee as a draft due to the 2013/14 exam results for Key Stage 4 and 5 being unavailable. He explained that there was no data for the number of students being entered into Short Course GCSEs as it was not collected by the County Council. He suggested that when the syllabus was reviewed, the need for students to be entered for an accredited course should be promoted. He noted that the final version of the report was circulated to the Kent SACRE via the Clerk. He requested that the final report be sent out to the Kent SACRE again by the Clerk see below.

Link to annual report:

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s50723/Annual%20Report%202013-14.pdf>

- (8) Additional Local Developments
- (a) Mr Foster stated that the County Council had received a Freedom of Information request about the teaching of Islam in Kent schools. Mr Foster responded to the request and directed them to the Kent syllabus.
 - (b) Mr Foster received a letter from a parent who was concerned about the teaching of RE in their child's school. Mr Foster responded to the letter and directed them to the Kent syllabus and advised them to contact the school.
 - (c) Mr Foster reported that Liz Pope was running a CPD training for RE teachers as part of the RE Hub on 21 March at the Robert Napier School, Gillingham.

- (d) Mr Foster referred Members to the NASACRE newsletter which contained an article on completing annual reports. He stated that this may be something SACRE would wish to consider before writing their next annual report. The Chairman stated that he would send a copy of the SACRE Annual Review to Lord Nash.

62. Patterns of Attendance
(Item 10)

- (1) Members noted the Patterns of Attendance report.

63. Dates of 2015 Meetings
(Item 11)

- (1) Members noted the following dates of meetings in 2015:
 - (a) SACRE
Wednesday 17 June 2015 -Highworth Grammar School, Ashford
Monday 23 November 2015 – County Hall, Maidstone
 - (b) SACRE Briefings - Oakwood House, Maidstone
Mon 11 May 2015
Mon 19 Oct 2015
 - (c) Primary Youth SACRE
Wednesday 20 May – Canterbury Christ Church University

64. Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent
(Item 12)

- (1) The Chairman stated that there were no urgent items.

65. Member Presentation: Miss R Walters - Preparing teachers to develop SMSC
(Item 13)

- (1) Miss Walters gave a thought provoking interactive presentation on 'Preparing teachers to develop SMSC' which was gratefully received by Members.
- (2) A copy of the presentation is appended to the Minutes.

What Lies Beyond?

Spiritual? Moral, Social and Cultural Development?
In Primary Schools?

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WHAT IS SMSC?

• Spiritual (Self Awareness/Knowledge)	Meaning Reflection/Stillness
• Moral (Right and Wrong/Decisions)	Action Consequences
• Social (Positive Relationships)	Interaction Child/Child/Adult
• Cultural (Celebrating Diversity) (From Eade 2006)	Belonging Community

Schools With Soul RSA 2014

- *Issues*
- Marginalisation
- Misunderstanding of concepts of spirituality and well-being
- No incentive to focus on purpose, aims, ethos
- Lack of vision, planning, delivery
- Sanitisation due to fear of relevance and controversial issues

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What is Spirituality?

- Definition
- Latin "spirare" to breathe
- Greek "pneuma" breath or wind
- That which gives life or animates
- Breathing creativity into school
- That which integrates
- Is intangible, what part in educational process?

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Put It In A Pedagogy!

- Pedagogy is a process of relating aims, curriculum content and methodology
- Two contrasting views

Engaging with spirituality must involve encountering communities and traditions. Critical reflection within cultural pluralism
(Wright *Spiritual Pedagogy*)
Truth and knowledge underpin education

Mickey Mouse Spirituality! (Taggart)

Truth is related to personal narrative constructed from individual experience. Children can construct their own spiritual development.
(Erricker *The Education of the Whole Child*)
Meaning is at the heart of education, emotion and imagination are as important as intelligence

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SMSC Development Development or Journey?

- STANDARDS AGENDA SMSC AGENDA
 - Content Process
 - Skills and Knowledge Relationships
 - Literacy and Numeracy Breadth
 - Pace and Challenge Reflection
 - Measurable Results ? Outcomes
- (from Eade 2006)

Deep Learning (Saljo 1979)

- Relate the subject matter to each other and the real world
- Reinterpreting knowledge to understand reality in a different way
- Self affirming positive relationship with the exploration of the subject matter and other learners
- Authentic curiosity applied to issues in a learning community

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Spirituality and the Curriculum

- Spirituality constructed not known?
- Should we be affirming beyond the cognitive? What we are and are becoming.
- The present emphasis of the curriculum "leads to cognitive performance rather than critical autonomy"
- The curriculum has become "a script for knowing instead of a vehicle for learning"
(See *Spiritual Education, Cultural, Religious and Social Differences* ed Erricker, Erricker, Ota)

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What is Spirituality?

- Spirituality as Dynamism
- Spirituality as Challenging
- Spirituality as recovering religious truth
- Spirituality as aestheticism
- Spirituality as communal identity

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Spiritual Intelligence

- A spiritually intelligent person has learned to
LIVE (improve the self)
DIALOGUE (inner speech)
DIE (recognise a perspective beyond)
READ (meditate on truths)

And is therefore constantly TRANSFORMED
(Zohar and Marshall, Broadbent and Brown)

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Eminent Thoughts

- "The distinction between all the trivia we can talk about and all the essentials we can't"
(Wittgenstein)
- Helps prevent "the idolatry of the immediate to the exclusion of the ultimate"
(Chesterton)

From Watson
Priorities in Religious Education

"Whatever view of reality deepens our sense of the tremendous issues of life is nearer the truth than any which diminishes that sense"
(Inge from Copley *Spiritual Development in the State School*)

"The great purpose of education should be to give people a greater reliance on the validity of their own inward and private experience, rather than a distrust of it"
(Wilson from Watson *Priorities in Religious Education*)

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- "Spiritual Intelligence is characterised by a fundamental valuing of the lives and development of all members of a school community"
(MacGilchrist 1997 quoted in
A Passion for Teaching by Christopher Day 2004)

Should we refer to spiritual "health" or awareness not "development"?

FAQS

- Do we all have a "spiritual capacity?"
- Does spirituality **have to be religious**? Is it damaged by association with religion?
- Is there **spiritual intelligence**?
- If it is intangible and spontaneous can it be **developed**? should it be **measured or assessed**?
- Can/should you **scaffold** spirituality?
- Do you need **specialised language**?
- Is it **all through the curriculum** or just RE ,Collective Worship, Citizenship?
- Is it **subversive enough** to be engaged with in school? (does it challenge "false" spiritualities eg consumerism, individualism and is thus repressed by the adult world?)

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What Experiences?

- Poetry, Music, Art, Conversation, Shape, Beauty, Colour, Wonder, Stillness, Relationship with Natural World, Meanings beneath, Patterns, Links, Connections, Story, Reflection, Questions
- Naming feelings and emotions
- Responses/engaging with ourselves, neighbours, God?

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The Enchantment of Childhood? Spirituality is Evident in what we most Value (Hull)

- Effect of globalisation
 - Superficial consumer culture, greed, idolatry of money
 - Competition not collaboration
 - Materialism and superficiality
- So:
- Safe spaces for inner experience and imagination
 - Curiosity, play, joy in present, adventure, magic, sacred, secret spaces, beauty, reconnect with nature
 - Different reality, depth principle of life, longing for satisfying relationships, intimacy, meaningful communities, shared values, less stress, future vision
- (see Grey M. in *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* Vol 11 No 1 April 2006)
- Meet ugly reality of child's world
- (Ramsey in *Thatcher Spirituality and the Curriculum*)

Across the Curriculum

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Art | Looking and Creating |
| • Music | Listening and Creating |
| • History | Investigating and Wondering |
| • Geography | Exploring and Marvelling |
| • PHSE | Reflecting and Discussing |
| • RE | Searching and Responding |
| • Numeracy | Finding Patterns and Being Challenged |
| • Literacy | Expressing and Articulating |
| • PE | Being Alive and Enjoying |
| • ICT | Visiting the World |
| • Science | Experimenting and Discovering |
| • Citizenship | Questioning and Collaborating |

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Inspecting Spirituality

- Values projected by staff and pupils
- Quality of relationships between staff and pupils, methods of addressing each other
- How is conflict resolved?
- Quality of physical environment
- Range of opportunities outside formal curriculum
- Relationships with wider community
- Tone and content of material published by school

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A Teaching Perspective

- Openness, humour, listening, consistency, trust = Good Relationships
- Value each pupil
- Wide range of activities
- Open questions
- Role Play
- Encourage independent learning
- Bring in enrichment
- Be childlike to experience
- Teachers as Learners!
(from Brown and Seaman
National Society Project)

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A School Perspective

- Opportunities for
Reflection
Valuing Observation
Exploring the Unanswerable
Respect
Staff as role models
Structures and Spontaneity
(from Brown and Seaman
National Society Project)

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A Classroom Perspective

- Active Learning
- Circle Time
- Class Worship
- Confidential Support
- Celebrate Work
- Good Relationships
- Reflection and Stillness
- Share Experiences
(from Brown and Seaman
National Society Project)

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Spiritual Traditions

- **Christianity** the transformation of the world through love
- **Judaism** the spirituality of the mundane and normal
- **Islam** the extinction of the self in God
- **Hinduism** the discovery of self
- **Buddhism** the liberation of ethical dispositions

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Implications

- What is a moral community?
 - How is moral development different from managing behaviour?
 - A positive basis of virtues and qualities
- (Eaude 2006)

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Values
 - Motivation
 - Decisions
 - Right and Wrong
 - Responsibilities
 - Consistency
- A mixture of example, habituation and conscious choice? (Eaude 2006)

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Relationships
- Rules
- Consideration
- Consequences

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Diversity
- Awareness
- Understanding
- Expression

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YOU the TEACHER

- “It ought to be self evident that when adults are working with children they are primarily communicating a way of being human. Teachers are not there primarily to process information or train in thinking skills”
Hay 2006

And Finally! Or perhaps not!

- **Relationships and atmosphere** within the classroom are crucial
- Question, silence and wonder (Bentley)
- **“The teacher, the teaching and learning and the taught are all grounded in mystery”**
(Webster from Copley
Spiritual Development in the State School)

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Developing the Whole Child

- And, when an increasing number of young teachers are leaving the profession because it was not “what they expected”
- “the most startling truth of all might be that there is a direct link between the spiritual and teacher retention”

Bill Gent *Spiritual Development and School Life:
Finding the Words Resource Spring 2002*

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