

SPRINGVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Established 1981



PERSEVERE

RELIGIOUS POLICY

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1. TITLE OF POLICY:

The name of this policy is SPRINGVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL: RELIGIOUS POLICY

2. EFFECTIVE DATE:

AUGUST 2024

3. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:

This policy shall be reviewed every three years or sooner when there is a change in the relevant legislative framework or operations.

4. REVISION HISTORY:

July 2024 – SGB approval 29 July 2024

5. PREAMBLE:

- 5.1. The Constitution and the South African Schools Act, sets the tone for people of goodwill to work out their own approaches and express them in the religious policy.
- 5.2. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa emphasizes that there should be balance between freedom for religious belief and expression and freedom from religious coercion and discrimination. It guarantees that "Everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, religious conviction, expression, and association." The Constitution also explicitly prohibits unfair discrimination on grounds that include religion, belief, and conscience.
- 5.3. The South African School Act upholds the constitutional rights of all citizens to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion, and freedom from unfair discrimination on any grounds whatsoever, it allows religious observances to be conducted at a public school under rules issued by the governing body if such observances are conducted on an equitable basis and attendance by learners and members is free and voluntary.
- 5.4. The Gauteng Schools Education Act, states that the religious policy of public schools shall be made by the Governing Body of the school after consultation with the Department and subject to the approval of the members of the Executive Council.
- 5.5. The National Policy on Religion and Education, highlights the following underpinning principles in a religious policy, it should:
 - recognise the rich and diverse religious heritage of our country
 - adopt a co-operative model that accepts our rich heritage and
 - explore the possibility of creative inter-action between schools and faith whilst, protecting our young people from religious discrimination or coercion.

6. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THIS POLICY:

Springvale Primary is a school which endeavours to develop each learner's spiritual education. We respect all religions and recognise each learner's democratic right to exercise their own beliefs.

We observe the values that are reflected in all religions as our guiding principles which are:

- Pride
- Perseverance
- Service
- Accountability
- Compassion
- Forgiveness
- Hope
- Integrity
- Peace
- Respect
- Thankfulness

We, the Governing Body, staff and parents of Springvale Primary School:

- 6.1. Recognise that everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought and belief.
- 6.2. Respect the religious diversity in our school.
- 6.3. Seek to promote an understanding and knowledge of diverse religious beliefs and practices.
- 6.4. Seek to promote the moral and spiritual development of all learners.
- 6.5. Commit ourselves to inculcating sound values through a variety of religious practices across all religions.
- 6.6. Ensure that there are no discriminatory practices amongst learners and staff in based on religious beliefs and orientation to a particular faith or religion.
- 6.7. Promote tolerance and unity among learners and staff through diversity of religious practices and beliefs existing in the school community.
- 6.8. Ensure that minority religions in a school are protected and respected and afforded the dignity and status equivalent to the majority religion in the school.

This policy will endeavour to give guidelines on religious education, celebrating religious festivals/holidays, religious clothing, school assemblies, handling learners and staff from all religions, assessment of religious education and the multi-faith approach to religious education.

7. Definitions and Acronyms

7.1 Definitions

Term	Definition
Religion	Is used to describe the comprehensive and fundamental orientation in the world belief system with regard to ideas of divinity, spiritual and non-secular beliefs, the organisation thereof which are established in order to promote and protect these beliefs
Religious observance	Activities, behaviours and practices that recognise and express the views, beliefs and commitments of a particular religion
Freedom of conscience	Refers to the freedom of an individual to consider a fact, point of view or thought independent of others.
Freedom of religion	Free from religious expression, coercion and predjudice
Religion Education	Describes a set of curriculum outcomes which define what a learner should know about that religion
Religious instruction	Refers to a programme of instruction which is aimed at providing information regarding a particular set of religious beliefs with a view to promoting the inculcation and adherence thereto.
Religious holiday	Any recognised day of festivities celebrated by cultural or religious communities.
Religious festival	a day or period of celebration of any cultural or religious activity that is recognised as a feature of a particular cultural or religious community
School day	Refers to that portion of each day in which it is compulsory for teachers and learners to be at school. It entails the 7 hours contact time that is expected of educators and learners , including breaks, compulsory activities, assembly and extramural activities

7.2 Acronyms

Acronyms	Explanation
SGB	School Governing Body
HoD	Head of Department
MEC	Member of the Executive Council

7. APPLICATION AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY:

The religious policy applies to all learners, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff as well as the SGB members of the school.

8. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS AND POLOCIES:

- 8.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), as amended.
- 8.2 National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), as amended.
- 8.3 The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended.
- 8.4 Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998).
- 8.5 Gauteng Education Policy Act, 1998 (Act No. 12 of 1998), as amended.
- 8.6 Gauteng Schools Education Act, 1995 (Act No. 6 of 1995), as amended.
- 8.7 National Policy on Religion and Education (General Notice No. 1307 of 2003)
- 8.8 Admission of Learners to Public Schools (General Notice No. 4138 of 2001).

9. Relevant Policies and Provincial Circulars

- 9.1 Circular 19 of 2004
- 9.2 National Policy on Religion and Education (General Notice No. 1307 of 2003)

10. POLICY CONTENT

10.1 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious lessons form part of the curriculum RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS, FESTIVALS AND OBSERVANCES:

- The school recognises official public holidays.
- Learners wishing to observe religious festivals that do not fall on public holidays, weekends or during school vacation time, will be given that day off. The learner will, however, be marked absent on the class register for the day on which the festival falls. The learner will not be penalized in terms of attendance record.
- Parents of learners who wish to have time off school to observe religious festivals that do not fall on public holidays, weekends or during school vacation time, must inform the school Principal in writing before the event.
- It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that learners are up to date with schoolwork missed due to religious absence.
- The school will honour all religious holidays indicated in the Government Calendar. Children observing these days after formal permission as per 4.3 above was granted by the principal, will not be penalised for any assessments done on such a day.

10.2 RELIGIOUS CLOTHING

- All learners are required to comply with the school uniform as per the code of conduct.
- Parents of learners who wish to wear specific items of religious clothing must submit a written request to the principal. The written request must give details of the specific clothing and be accompanied by a letter from the relevant religious institution verifying the legitimacy of the clothing and validating the religious requirements of that faith.
- Should the learner be granted permission to wear a particular item of religious clothing, the facilitator should ensure that other learners understand this so that respect for another's religion may be enhanced.

10.3 FRIDAY PRAYER

Learners to be collected at 12:15

10.4 SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- All learners will be expected to attend school assemblies.
- Should a special festival be held, a representative from that religion may be allowed to share interesting facts about their religion at the assembly.

The school assembly will consist of reading of universal prayers, songs of praise or a short prayer. This will take place on an equitable basis.

- Assemblies should be used as forums for celebrating religious and cultural diversity, in keeping with the values of the Constitution.
- If religious materials are used at assembly, they should preferably be presented in the framework outlined for Religion Education, that is, as an educational experience rather than a religious ceremony.

10.5. School Calendar

The school will ensure that religious holidays of all religions mentioned in 10. 2 will be included on the annual school calendar to ensure that during the setting of examinations and tests, pupils are not prejudiced by their attendance at religious observances.

10.6. School activities during religious holidays/festivals

10.6.1 Consideration should be given to the scheduling of the following activities during Religious holidays/festivals to allow for maximum participation at these events
And assessments:

- a) sporting activities/competitions;
- b) cycle tests/examination; and
- c) educational excursions

10.7 RELIGIONS OF THE STAFF MEMBERS

- We respect the right of staff to hold their own beliefs.

- Staff members should not use the classroom to advance religious beliefs, except where required by the curriculum.
- Staff members will not be expected to participate in collective worship activities, but must be present to take responsibility for the learners entrusted to their care

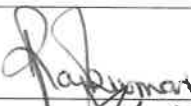
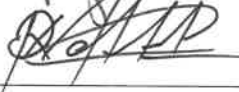
10.8. OTHER

- The School Governing Body reserves the right to deal with any unforeseen situations in consultation with the principal and school management team.
- This policy will be reviewed to consider any changes in legislation.
- Criteria for admission of learners to public schools should not unfairly discriminate against learners based on their religion, thought, belief and opinion

11 SHORT TITLE

This policy shall be called SPRINGVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL RELIGIOUS POLIC

12 APPROVAL

Designation	Reviewer: Name & Surname	Signature	Date noted
School Principal	J. RAJKUMAR		5/08/2024
SGB Chairperson	DANNY MATHIBULLU		5/08/2024
ISSP: Policy & Planning			
Circuit Manager			
Cluster Manager			
District Director			