



Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

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Introduction

The Shires School aims to provide our pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that fulfils all the requirements of the academic National Curriculum whilst addressing a pupil's growth of social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding by providing an SMSC framework for their development.

Purpose

At The Shires School we recognise that a pupil's personal development spiritually, morally, socially and culturally plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

All curriculum areas have a contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum. The integrity and spirituality of all faith backgrounds will be respected and explored. The diversity of spiritual traditions will be recognised and pupils will be given access to alternative views.

All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as valuable individuals and showing respect for pupils and their families. Young people should learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others.

Pupils should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

All curriculum areas should seek to use illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible. This will be reflected in the teacher's planning and learning resources.

Statement of Policy

Our policy is based around the following key statements to empower pupils to:

- be reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, use their imagination and creativity and develop curiosity in their learning
- develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school
- take part in a range of activities requiring social skills
- develop awareness of, and respect towards, diversity in relation to gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation and disability
- gain a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through school and onto the next stage of their education and training
- overcome barriers to their learning
- respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities provided by the school, including developing an appreciation of theatre, music and literature
- develop the skills and attributes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic, modern Britain
- understand and appreciate the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.

The Shires School is committed to offering pupils the opportunities to:

- identify, reflect on and explore experiences and distinguish between right and wrong
- discuss moral issues develop and talk about their own attitudes and values
- take responsibility for their own decisions
- develop an understanding of social responsibilities and citizenship
- celebrate a diversity of cultures.

Spiritual Development

The school supports the process of acquiring positive personal beliefs and values as:

- an active basis for personal and social behaviour
- for the consideration of the meaning and purpose of human existence
- the seeking of answers to questions about the universe.

The primary aim is to underline the spiritual concerns of humanity (including matters of life and death, the purpose of life, choices in life).

Spiritual development is experienced through many areas of the curriculum.

Lessons aid pupils to gain insight into their own religious beliefs and loyalties, sort out their personal and spiritual values and practices so that they may take up their own spiritual allegiances.

Moreover, it contributes to the moral and social development of our young people, developing consideration for others, an appreciation of human rights and responsibilities and a concern for justice in society. Also, it develops in pupils respect for the practices of different religious faiths and a sympathetic understanding of their underlying values and concerns. It should develop tolerance for the variety of beliefs and the customs of the citizens of our world.

Opportunities exist in the school's curriculum that enable pupils by discussion to think about religion and appreciate the variety of faiths to heighten awareness of the spiritual dimension in our lives creating tasks which question pupils and enable them to work out their own position on issues, both moral and religious.

Moral Development

Moral development:

- encourages pupils to develop fundamental precepts about behaviour and the reasons for behaviour
- helps pupils to develop the skills and confidence to make decisions
- gives pupils the confidence to listen to and respect the thinking of answers to questions about the universe.

The aims of curriculum work can be summarised as follows:

- to stimulate pupils into giving expression to their own moral beliefs and understanding
- to challenge them into trying to justify their beliefs and understanding with reasons
- to enable them to share with others their reflections, listen to others and struggle to resolve their disagreements
- to help them apply their growing moral competence in the context of vocational experience and the workplace to facilitate the extending and generating of their moral reflections beyond their own immediate experience to national and international issues.

The role of the teacher has the following elements:

- being alert to the moral dimensions of issues which are raised to pupils, or by the syllabus of the world of work, context and having the confidence to explore them
- the creation of materials and the setting up of activities and tasks for pupils, either alone or in groups

- putting questions into the discussion which challenge the positions pupils take and help them to think more deeply.

Social Development

Key moral issues at The Shires School are:

- developing verbal skills
- self-respect and integrity making right choices
- doing the right thing
- managing conflict
- telling the truth
- importance of trust and confidentiality
- friendship and loyalty to particular groups
- personal judgement laws and their justification, civil rights and duties
- the ethic of work
- human rights
- our relation to the non-human world

There is a planned programme of personal social and citizenship education, which aims to develop pupil awareness of moral issues as well as fostering a sense of responsibility and community values.

Codes of conduct and expected standards of behaviour are discussed with pupils by all staff members, and if necessary, other senior staff.

Effective communications are maintained between the school and parents to ensure pupils maximise their potential. In many aspects of the curriculum, external speakers are used to expose the pupils to a variety of viewpoints and opinions. The emphasis is to allow pupils to take responsibility for their own actions and provide them with a solid base of information on which to build the kind of self-confidence and self-control expected from our pupils.

Cultural Development

Through cultural development students gain an understanding of those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills that bond together to form cultures. Cultural Development is closely related to, and integrates, certain aspects of spiritual, moral and social development.

The school reinforces the values and customs of society as a whole and celebrates diversity and multi-culturalism. The cultural influences of home, community and religion are explored in order to extend the pupils' awareness and breadth of understanding. This is achieved through the formal curriculum, through extra-curricular activities and the

value placed overtly on the pupils' own cultural interests and achievements and the way in which they enrich their experiences of all aspects of culture.

At The Shires School we seek to provide an education, which not only develops and strengthens pupils' current awareness, but also allows them to develop new cultural insights by:

- avoiding cultural bias
- promoting an appreciation of cultural diversity.

The school seeks to enhance the cultural development of pupils by way of:

- the academic curriculum
- extra-curricular activities
- incorporating students' own home influences into discussions.

Pupils should be able to:

- know about their own culture and society and value their own cultural identity
- be aware of, and celebrate, cultural diversity
- understand the interdependence of groups within society
- know about societies and cultures other than their own
- be aware of the principal ways in which different people interpret the world

Ofsted Framework Definition

For of a brief understanding of SMSC, the description given in the current Ofsted framework is included:

How well the school promotes all pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum and through interactions with teachers, other adults and the local community as shown by pupils:

- being reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning
- developing and applying an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school
- taking part in a range of activities requiring social skills
- developing awareness of, and respect towards, diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation, and disability
- gaining a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training
- overcoming barriers to their learning
- responding positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities,

- provided by the school, including, for example developing an appreciation of theatre, music and literature
- developing the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic, modern Britain
- understanding and appreciating the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.

Teaching SMSC

Through classroom discussions we will give the pupils opportunities to:

- talk about personal experiences and feelings
- express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs
- speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying, death, etc.
- share thoughts and feelings with other people
- explore relationships with friends/family/others
- consider the needs and behaviour of others
- develop and express empathy
- develop self-esteem and a respect for others
- develop a sense of belonging
- develop the skills and attitudes that enable young people to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally, e.g. empathy, respect, open-mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness, etc.

Many curriculum areas provide opportunities to:

- listen and talk to each other
- learn an awareness of treating all as equals, accepting people who are different because of physical and learning difficulties
- agree and disagree
- experiencing good role models
- take turns and share equipment
- work co-operatively and collaboratively

Practical activities to develop SMSC will include:

- working together in different groupings and situations
- encouraging the pupils to behave appropriately at meal times
- taking responsibility
- encouraging teamwork in PE and games

- showing appreciation of the performances of other pupils regardless of ability
- hearing music from different composers, cultures and genres
- meeting people from different cultures and countries
- participation in a variety of different educational visits
- studying literature and art from different cultures and participating in workshops
- opportunities for the pupils to hear and see live performances by professional actors, dancers and musicians
- opportunities to make and evaluate food from other countries
- opportunities in music to learn songs from different cultures
- studying the contributions to society that certain famous people have made.