

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to all pupils at Hollygirt School. Hollygirt School's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy is developed to add to the feeling of respect and tolerance that pervades the school and is at the centre of its ethos. It recognises each and every member of the school's community as an individual, with the children the school's paramount responsibility. The policy is underpinned by the following articles from the Conventions of the Rights of a Child:

- 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority.
- 12: Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously.
- 14: Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents have the right to give their children information about this right.
- 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the following school policies and modus operandi:

- Ethos
- PSHE and Citizenship, including Fundamental British Values
- Collective Worship
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality Objectives
- Curriculum Policies

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the SMSC Policy is simple: it is to develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of the pupils, to develop them as entirely unique individuals, enabled to make good choices and respect others, whilst having the confidence to be who they are.

What is SMSC?

SMSC stands for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development:

Spiritual Development

Pupils' spiritual development is shown by their:

- beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values.
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences

Moral Development

Pupils' moral development is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives
- understanding of the consequences of their actions
- interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues

Social Development

Pupils' social development is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels

Cultural Development

Pupils' cultural development is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage
- willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities
- interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities

Principles of the Teaching and Learning of SMSC

SMSC development is important because:

- It gives the opportunity to develop 'whole person' attributes
- It gives the opportunity to become aware of broader cultural issues
- It gives the opportunity for spiritual contemplation and development
- It fosters a culture of respect and tolerance
- It celebrates diversity and promotes understanding of others
- It prepares pupils for an active and positive role in society

Teaching of SMSC

SMSC is not taught as a separate lesson and, as such, it is not separately timetabled. However, it is taught across the curriculum and beyond (including extra-curricular activities, trips etc.) and is very much a cornerstone to Hollygirt School's ethos of recognising and developing each child as an individual.

The primary method of delivery is through PSHE lessons, RS lessons and assemblies, and pupils are encouraged and expected to show respect and understanding of others at all times.

The delivery of SMSC is primarily through spoken communication, with pupils being encouraged to ask questions, express their opinions and listen to the opinions of others. Teachers may guide discussions but ideally these will be pupil led. Appropriate practical activities may be used to complement learning, and trips are also essential to the teaching of SMSC. An up to date audit of all SMSC activities is available in both the Junior and Senior Schools.

Teachers differentiate their activities and lessons to accommodate for the broad range of pupils' abilities, including SEND and able pupils in all subject areas. The SMSC development of all must be facilitated and Hollygirt School takes pride in its achievements in this area.

Strategies for Ensuring Progress and Continuity

SMSC is not assessed in the same way as most subject areas are. However, it is central to the school's ethos that we, as a small school, know all the pupils as individuals, and staff constantly communicate with the children in their immediate care (such as those in their form group or class) and beyond. All school staff endeavour to know all of the pupils at Hollygirt School very well which means that staff are able to monitor pupils' SMSC development. If they have concerns, staff are in very regular contact with parents of the pupils. They also feedback positive developments. Staff can raise pupils for discussion in weekly staff meetings or directly with SLT and ELT.

In addition to this, SMSC should be factored into lesson planning, where appropriate: teachers are aware of the need to plan opportunities to develop a wide variety of spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs. A vast majority will be delivered through cross-curricular activities as well as specific PSHE, RS and speaking and listening activities. Staff are encouraged to take photographs of activities relating to SMSC; there are display boards around the school to keep pupils and parents abreast of recent happenings and these are also communicated through the school's social media and Holly Leaves.

Opportunities for Spiritual Development

Planned opportunities for spiritual development in all subjects can be seen across the school. Children are given opportunities to reflect upon the meaning of spiritual experiences. Examples of experiences commonly regarded as spiritual include:

- Curiosity and mystery
- Awe and wonder
- Connection and belonging
- Heightened self-awareness
- Prayer and worship
- Deep feelings of what is felt to be ultimately important
- A sense of security, well-being, worth and purposefulness.

Opportunities for Moral Development

At Hollygirt School we believe that a morally aware pupil will develop a wide range of skills. These can include the following:

- Distinguish right from wrong, based on knowledge of the moral codes of their own and other cultures
- Develop an ability to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions
- Have an ability to make responsible and reasoned judgements
- Ensure a commitment to personal values
- Have respect for others' needs, interests and feelings, as well as their own
- Develop a desire to explore their own and others' views, and an understanding of the need to review and re-assess their values, codes and principles in the light of experience

Our school develops pupil moral development by providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school:

- Inculcating respect their own rights and those of others through our UNICEF Rights Respecting School work.
- Promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality.

- Giving pupils opportunities across the curriculum to explore and develop moral concepts and values – e.g. truth, justice, equality of opportunity, right and wrong.
- Developing an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practice moral decision making.
- Rewarding expressions of moral insights and good behaviour.
- Recognising and respecting the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the school and wider community.
- Encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions e.g. respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour, providing models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts and assemblies; reinforcing the school's values through images, posters, classroom displays, etc. and monitoring in simple ways, the success of what is provided.

We teach the pupils to be aware of their own actions, take responsibility for their own bodies and encourage independence. We will help the children to identify their feelings and think these through so that they are expressed in behaviour that is socially acceptable. This is done through collective worship, house and form time, PSHE and circle time sessions. We are interested in the development of the whole child and will endeavour to raise their self-esteem through praise, stickers, merits, Star of the Week and other means that highlight both academic and social achievements (see Behaviour Policy).

Opportunities for Social Development

At Hollygirt School we recognise that pupils who are becoming socially aware are likely to be developing the ability to:

- Adjust to a range of social contexts by appropriate and sensitive behaviour
- Relate well to other people's social skills and personal qualities
- Work successfully, as a member of a group or team
- Share views and opinions with others
- Resolve conflicts maturely and appropriately
- Reflect on their own contribution to society
- Show respect for people, living things, property and the environment
- Exercise responsibility
- Understand how societies function and are organised in structures such as the family and the school
- Understand the notion of interdependence in an increasingly complex society

Our school develops pupil social development by identifying key values and principles on which school and community life is based.

- Fostering a sense of community, with common, inclusive values
- Promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality
- Encouraging pupils to work co-operatively
- Encouraging pupils to recognise and respect social differences and similarities
- Providing positive experiences to reinforce our values as a school community, e.g. through assemblies, team building activities, residential experiences, school productions.
- Helping pupils develop personal qualities which are valued in a civilised society, for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, interdependence, self-respect and an awareness of others' needs
- Providing opportunities for engaging in the democratic process and participating in community life
- Providing opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility
- Providing positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community

- Monitoring in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided

Opportunities for Cultural Development

Children should be made aware of the diversity of other cultures both within modern Britain and throughout the world. This can be done through music, PE, Art and many other curriculum areas. This is shown in our curriculum plans. Pupils who are becoming culturally aware are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- An ability to reflect on important questions of meaning and identity
- An understanding of cultural diversity
- An understanding of how British culture has been shaped
- An understanding that cultures can change over time
- A regard for achievement in different cultures
- An awareness of how their life has been/can be enriched through cultural experiences

Our school develops pupils' cultural development by extending pupils' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language.

- Encouraging them to think about special events in life and how they are celebrated
- Recognising and nurturing particular gifts and talents; providing opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encouraging pupils to reflect on their significance
- Emphasising cultural achievements through displays, posters, exhibitions, etc as well as developing partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend pupils' cultural awareness, e.g. theatre, museum and gallery visits.
- Providing opportunities for children to learn about global cultures
- Building an awareness of the historical elements that have built British culture
- Building an awareness of the diversity of British culture and the richness this brings

Fundamental British Values (FBV)

At Hollygirt School the issue of FBV is woven throughout our curriculum and school ethos. We aim to:

- Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely
- Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
- Encourage respect for other people
- Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England

School Council/Pupil Forum

The School Council/Pupil Forum is a body of elected pupils from every year/house group from Year 1 upwards. Each pupil has a vote and this is inextricably linked to SMSC development. Our desire is for pupils to know that their expertise, opinions and ideas are valued in all aspects of school life. The School Council/Pupil Forum permeates all levels of our work together, from pupils participating in small group classroom conversations to pupils establishing procedures, events and contributing to the overarching ethos of the school.

Assemblies

Hollygirt School aims to deliver assemblies which are broadly Christian in character and support the understanding of Fundamental British Values. The provision of assemblies for the current academic year is as follows:

Junior School

Wednesday: Whole Junior School
Friday: Whole Junior School 'Stars of the Week'

In addition there will be one class assembly per week.

Senior School

Monday: Tutor Time
Tuesday: House time
Wednesday: Tutor Time
Thursday: Tutor Time
Friday: Whole School Assembly, Years 7 to 11

Individual mentor time to be built in during the week.

Assemblies are planned on a termly basis for both Junior and Senior School. The school has its own hymn book for use in collective worship.

Aims

The provision of acts of collective worship is part of the fulfilment of the school's aims.

- Assemblies are part of the wider school curriculum and therefore aim to provide part of the breadth and balance in responding to the needs and interests of pupils.
- Assemblies are part of the school's aim to provide opportunities to meet the intellectual, aesthetic, creative, moral, social and particularly emotional and spiritual needs of each pupil. Assemblies also endeavour to foster a form or year loyalty by sharing interests and experiences.
- Assemblies also have a part to play in the fostering of good standards of self-discipline, courtesy, consideration for others and the individual ability to distinguish between right and wrong.
- Assemblies give pupils and staff an opportunity to hear about extra-curricular activities and honour pupils for their achievements.

Objectives

The objectives of acts of collective worship might include:

- to explore a spiritual and moral dimension;
- to enhance and help deliver the aims of the school;
- to consider and give memorable and enjoyable experiences at significant times of year such as festivals;
- to encourage a sensitive understanding of a variety of beliefs and practices;
- to provide times of peace for reflection and occasionally for prayer;
- to respond to the aesthetic and support the search for meaning, and;
- to encourage a sense of responsibility and community including thinking about others and empathising with them to affirm values and commitment.

Many of the above are summarised from the Norfolk S.A.C.R.E. document found in *Collective Worship* by J King.

Withdrawal of Pupils from Assemblies

Parents may choose to have their child withdrawn from collective worship and assemblies with a religious theme and this request should be put in writing to the Headmistress.

Most in-school assemblies are based on a non-religious specific theme or a PSICHE topic. Where a hymn is sung, it is not compulsory to participate and if a prayer is said, pupils will be offered the opportunity to sit in quiet contemplation rather than to actively participate.

For specific religious festivals held in Christian places of worship, we would expect attendance from those of all faiths and none but active participation is not required.

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