



Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Education Policy

St Nicholas School is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School and promotes rights respecting values in all its policies



*The Governing Body of St Nicholas School formally adopted
this Policy on July 2024*

It will be reviewed in July 2026 unless otherwise advised

Signed _____

Headteacher

Signed _____

Chair of Governors

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Statement of Intent

At St Nicholas School we recognise that the personal development of children spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC) plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides children with opportunities to explore and develop

- Their own values and beliefs
- Their own spiritual awareness
- Their own standards of personal behaviour
- A positive, caring attitude towards other people
- An appreciation of the diversity and richness of their cultures.

The school prides itself on providing a consistently safe, caring and happy environment where each pupil is valued as an individual and can develop towards their full potential. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education of our pupils is implemented throughout the school's activities and is not limited to specific SMSC lessons.

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 2002
- DfE (2014) Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools'
- DfE (2014) 'National curriculum in England framework for key stages 1 to 4
- Ofsted (2021) 'School inspection handbook'

The policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Religious Education Policy
- PSHE Policy
- RSE Policy
- History Policy
- Communication Policy
- Curriculum and Learning Policy

2. A whole-school approach to SMSC education

The governing board will ensure that SMSC education is embedded across the school's activities to ensure that the potential of each pupil is developed in accordance with their individual needs and capabilities.

The headteacher and SLT will facilitate and encourage a school environment which is welcoming, inclusive and safe for all pupils and members of the school community, irrespective of their protected characteristics and/or background. Staff will be expected to model high standards of discipline, courtesy, respect and acceptance of others, and to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own actions.

The headteacher will work in collaboration with the subject leaders to ensure that lessons and activities, and expectations of pupils in relation to those lessons and activities, are appropriately adjusted to accommodate the needs of the pupils at St Nicholas School.

The aims of SMSC at St Nicholas are as follows:

- To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of our values and principles.

- To ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of SMSC issues through the curriculum and the general life of the school.
- To ensure that a child's education is set within the context that is meaningful and appropriate to their age, aptitude and background.
- To ensure that children know what is expected of them and why.
- To give each child a range of opportunities to reflect upon and discuss their beliefs, feeling and response to personal experiences.
- To enable children to develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- To enable children to begin to develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment and an appreciation of the many cultures that now enrich our society and school.
- To give each child the opportunity to explore social and moral issues and develop a sense of social and moral responsibility.

The school's **spiritual development** provision enables pupils to experience a broad and balanced curriculum which enables them to learn about themselves and others and the world around them. Most pupils are able to show imagination and creativity in how they learn. Where developmentally appropriate pupils are encouraged to be reflective about their beliefs and experiences and show an interest and respect towards others faiths, feelings and values.

The school's **moral development** provision supports pupils to recognise the consequences of actions which helps lead to an understanding of the differences between right and wrong. Where possible pupils are encouraged to be reflective about their actions and recognise what is a right or wrong action or behaviour. All pupils are given rewards and positive recognition for behaviours which reflect the school ethos of respect, care and understanding.

The school's **social development** provision encourages the pupil's to develop positive relationships and to engage in a range of activities which support and promote their well-being and ability to interact in a variety of social settings. By engaging in activities which promote self- awareness and awareness of others through turn taking, sharing and recognising individual needs our pupils are supported in developing social skills. St Nicholas has a diverse school community where everyone is supported to participate and be part of school society. The school regularly participates in a range of fundraising activities including supporting the local food bank at Harvest time, supporting Children in Need, Sports Relief, Comic Relief and Jeans for Genes Day.

The school's **cultural development** provision enables pupils to understand and appreciate the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others. The children are supported to develop an interest in exploring, improving their understanding of, and showing respect for, different faiths and cultures. The children participate in, and respond positively to, artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities through

a broad and balanced curriculum. Children in Key Stage 2 take part in a democratic vote of their school council representative – who meet regularly throughout the year - and all children are given a voice through choices made in their classrooms.

3. Cross-curriculum teaching and learning

SMSC education will take place across all areas of the curriculum. SMSC has particularly strong links to religious education, citizenship, history and PSHE. In conjunction with subject leaders, the school has developed an SMSC matrix, which shows where SMSC education, respectively, are embedded into subjects and provides evidence of their inclusion.

All areas of the curriculum will draw examples from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible. Teaching staff will be expected to foster an open environment in their lessons in which respect, tolerance for different values, opinions and backgrounds, and team work are encouraged and prioritised in line with the guiding principles of SMSC education.

Teaching staff will use classroom discussion to support pupils to:

- Talk about their experiences, thoughts and feelings.
- Express and clarify personal ideas and beliefs.
- Speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying and death.
- Explore their relationships with friends, family and others.
- Consider, and show empathy towards, the needs and experiences of others.
- Develop self-esteem and personal confidence.
- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Develop their SMSC skills, e.g. compassion, respect, open-mindedness, sensitivity and critical awareness.

Many areas across the curriculum provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Listen and talk to each other
- Learn to treat one another as equals regardless of protected characteristics and/or background
- Recognise and celebrate the differences and similarities between themselves and others
- Agree and disagree with people respectfully
- Work co-operatively and collaboratively

The school will use the following methods to help pupils develop an understanding of how they can influence decision making through the democratic process:

- Electing a school council
- Hearing pupils' voice through choices made in the classroom
- Establishing monitoring roles for pupils, e.g. class monitors and cloakroom monitors, to allow pupils opportunities to develop and display leadership skills
- Appointing playground leaders/buddies

- Issuing pupil questionnaires to gather pupil opinions on decisions e.g. using Talking Mats through the EHCP process
- Providing pupils with opportunities to form and express opinions through circle time and communication activities such as Sulp.

The school will use the following methods to help pupils develop an understanding of the rule of law:

- Setting and enforcing high expectations for attendance, punctuality and behaviour
- Setting and enforcing classroom and school rules
- Teaching pupils about laws that are relevant to the school setting
- Teaching pupils about adults who fulfil roles designed to help others, including staff members, emergency services, friends and family
- Teaching pupils about the role of the monarchy and of previous monarchies
- Providing pupils with opportunities to celebrate the lives of people who have influenced the course of history
- Implementing clear, consistent and defined sanctions for challenging behaviour in line with the Behaviour Policy

We may use the following methods to help pupils develop an understanding of different faiths and beliefs:

- Celebrating differences and similarities through cultural event days, for example, International Day
- Arranging trips to places of worship
- Teaching about different beliefs and cultures
- Exploring moral values through lessons, stories and assemblies
- Arranging visits from various religious leaders
- Blocking out times in the timetable for RE lessons

The school will have a range of assemblies and opportunities for collective worship. These will be:

- Develop a community spirit
- Be broadly Christian in nature
- Promote the school's culture, values and expectations
- Explore important moral and social themes
- Promote care for the planet
- Provide important notices and information
- Celebrate children's successes and achievements both in and out of the school (Star of the Week and House Points)
- Share and celebrate world cultures, religions and festivals (Class assemblies and year group assemblies)

- Promote racial harmony and respect for all.

The school will also employ additional practical activities and practices to encourage pupils' SMSC development, including:

- Encouraging pupils to work together in different groupings and situations.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to consume and study literature, art, music and media from artists of different cultures, backgrounds, genres and faiths.
- Organising in a variety of different social and cultural school trips, e.g. to museums or places of worship.
- Hearing and seeing live performances by professional actors, dancers and musicians.
- Learning songs from different cultures and playing a range of instruments.
- Making and consuming food from other countries.
- Studying the contributions to society that famous people of all backgrounds have made.
- Encouraging the children to behave appropriately at meal times
- Encouraging teamwork in Pe and games
- Appreciation of and respect for the work and performance of other children regardless of ability

4. Community Links

The school recognises that an important part of SMSC development is enabling pupils to become active participants in their local community and, as such, will continue to foster strong links with the wider community.

These links will be formed through a variety of activities, including:

- Community fundraising activities.
- Hosting school events to which community members are invited as participants or audience members.
- Setting up work experience and volunteering opportunities for pupils with community organisations.
- Questionnaires sent to parents and other members of the community to gather opinions, e.g. on school initiatives or practices.
- Welcoming visitors into our school
- The development of a strong home-school agreement is regarded as very important, enabling parents and teachers to work in an effective partnership to support the children.
- Children will be taught to appreciate and take responsibility for their local environment.
- Liaison with local secondary schools to support the primary curriculum and

effective transition, takes place.

The school will engage parents and members of the wider community in the educational life of pupils, ensuring that the diversity and varying experiences of the local community are reflected in the way in which pupils are educated.

5. Promoting fundamental British Values

St Nicholas School promoted Fundamental British values through our SMSC education, which is embedded in the school's holistic education.

British values are promoted through a cross curricular approach and are intrinsic to our ethos and everyday practise. We recognise where Fundamental British Values is most successful when those value and attitudes are modelled and promoted by all staff. The Fundamental British Values are:

Democracy: The ability to understand and communicate are integral to pupil's development. We empower pupils to communicate using their preferred method of communication, such as photos, symbols, Makaton signing, gestures and objects of reference. By promoting pupil voice, we support democracy. We do this by completing Talking Mats with the children through the EHCP review process. We also have school council who discuss topics relevant to them.

The Rule of Law: We involve children in setting classroom and school rules and reflecting on acceptable behaviour in a variety of situations. Behaviour support strategies and plans help to provide consistency in expectations, rewards and consequences which in turn supports pupils' access to learning activities.

Individual Liberty: Pupils are supported to become as independent as possible, both within and beyond the school environment. Pupils are given opportunities to express their likes, dislikes, talents and to make choices. Some pupils have individual responsibilities within the school, such as classroom jobs, helping in assembly and sorting class fruit orders.

Tolerance and Respect: Pupils have opportunities to work with a range of peers, and positive interactions are always fostered. We facilitate opportunities for pupils to take part in community events with other children, such as the Croydon Sport and Music events. Cultural respect and celebration form an integral part of the school's curriculum. Through peer interactions, pupils are encouraged to develop their awareness of their own identity and that of others

6. Monitoring and Review

SMSC provision is reviewed on an annual basis in the following ways:

- The monitoring of teaching and learning and work scrutiny by the curriculum coordinator, headteacher and governors as part of our general monitoring.
- Regular discussions at staff and governors' meetings.
- Annual policy audits.
- The development of RE, PSHE and collective worship to reflect the diversity of both our school and society.
- The sharing of classroom work and practice.

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher and pastoral lead, and any changes will be communicated to all stakeholders.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2026.

Appendix A

Definitions

Spiritual development

Understanding of self and others is at the heart of spiritual development and is not linked solely to a particular doctrine or faith. Spiritual development is, therefore, accessible to everyone. All areas of the curriculum should contribute to children's spiritual development.

Spiritual Development – as a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable children to:

- sustain their self-esteem in their learning experience
- develop their capacity for independent thought and where appropriate critical thought.
- foster their emotional life and express their feelings
- experience moments of stillness and reflection
- explore their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences
- form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships

Moral development

Is concerned with children's ability to make judgements about how they should behave and act and the reasons for such behaviour. It refers to their knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes in relation to what is right or wrong. Moral development, based on Christian principles, should enable children to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and behaviour.

Moral Development – as a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable children to:

- recognise the unique value of each individual
- listen and respond appropriately to the views of others
- gain the confidence to cope to learn from mistakes
- take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others
- distinguish between right and wrong
- show respect for the environment
- make informed and independent judgements.

Social development

Refers to the development of abilities and qualities that children need to acquire if they are to play a full and active part in society. It also relates to the growth of knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects. Children learn to lead, use their own initiative and to use individual skills and strengths when working together towards a common goal. The ability to be led, to support others and to recognise the different skills of other group members can be developed when children work cooperatively.

Social Development – as a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable children to:

- develop an understanding of their individual and group identity
- learn about service in the school and wider community

Cultural development

At the heart of cultural development lies the necessity to develop a sense of personal identity, whilst at the same time, acquiring awareness, understanding and tolerance regarding the cultural traditions of others.

Cultural Development – as a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable children to:

- recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain
- recognise Christianity as a world-wide faith
- develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment.

IT								
Assemblies								
Trips								
Languages								
Charity events								
School council								
Key considerations							Yes	No
Are all aspects of SMSC evident when pupils move around the school?								
Are all aspects of SMSC reflected in classroom and corridor displays?								
Does the school website reflect a consistent approach to all aspects of SMSC?								

