



Heath Mount School

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) & Fundamental British Values Policy

Heath Mount School, Hertfordshire

**Independent Co-Educational Day and Boarding
School**

September 2024

1. **Legal Status**

This policy complies with Part 2, of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) 2019.

2. **Related Policies**

- Curriculum Policy
- Equality and Accessibility Plan
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- PSHEE Policy

3. **Application and Accessibility**

This is a whole school policy is available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways:

- via the school website;
- In the policies file on the Staff drive.

4. **Definitions**

Under Section 78 of the Education Act 2002, all schools must promote Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education. Definitions provided by the Act are:

- **Spiritual** - the growth of a sense of self, unique potential, understanding of strengths and weaknesses, a will to achieve, question and challenge and recognition of a need to address one's mental well-being.
- **Moral** - an understanding of the difference between right, wrong, moral conflict, developing concern for others reflection on the consequences of actions and making responsible moral decisions and acting on them.
- **Social** - a realisation of responsibilities and rights, ability to relate to others, to work with them for the common good, a sense of belonging and the awareness of the need and possibility of making an active contribution to society.
- **Cultural** - an understanding of cultural traditions, to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences; respect for one's own culture/s and the cultures of others; a curiosity about difference; an ability to contribute to culture.

5. The Department for Education has also identified the following core British values:

- **Democracy:** Respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process;

- **The rule of law:** Respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England;
- **Individual liberty:** Support and respect for the liberties of all within the law;
- **Mutual respect and acceptance:** Support for equality of opportunity for all and respect and acceptance of different faiths and religious and other beliefs.

6. The Equality Act 2010, lists the following as protected characteristics:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

7. **Policy Statement**

Heath Mount School ('the School') recognises the essential role SMSC education has to play in both pupil's individual development and the development of society as a whole. We aim to create the right culture and conditions to allow our pupils to flourish, not only during their time at school, but by building their character and values so that they can excel in life when they move on and benefit others by doing so. Students are encouraged to be reflective about their own beliefs and heritages, developing understanding and respect for the beliefs and cultures of others. They learn to consider ethical issues and what constitutes 'right' and 'wrong', growing a recognition of their own responsibilities in upholding values, behaviours and laws. Social skills are nurtured as pupils hone the ability to work cooperatively, resolve conflict and interact respectfully with others. Our provision for SMSC is a thread that runs through everything we do at Heath Mount, with the aim of helping our pupils develop into the person they aspire to be, thus taking forward with them into adulthood, the values and attitudes that will best serve society as well as enable them to live confident, healthy, independent lives.

- We aim to do this by being a school that:
 - actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and acceptance of those with different faiths and beliefs;

- ensures that principles are actively promoted which:
- a. enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
 - b. enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
 - c. encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
 - d. develop values, skills and behaviours that will enable pupils to be resilient and successful whilst in education and in their future lives;
 - e. enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
 - f. enable students to explore and discuss their own beliefs and social and moral issues, thus developing a sense of individual character alongside social and moral responsibility;
 - g. enable further acceptance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
 - h. encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act;
 - i. encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England;
 - j. preclude the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school;
 - k. take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils:
 - while they are at the school;
 - while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school;
 - in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

8. Implementation

- The School works to nurture a culture that allows pupils to flourish, not only during their time at school, but by building their character and values to excel in life when they move on. Our ethos is underpinned by both our Values and our Learning Power approach.

The School Values

Industry

Integrity

Acceptance

Resilience

Respect

Learning Powers

Collaboration

Perseverance

Reflection

Respect

All staff are considered to have a responsibility for SMSC both in the classroom setting and beyond. Everyone in the community is expected to show respect and promote positive behaviours, ensuring that everyone in the community feels a sense of belonging and value at the school. Our approach encourages self-respect, respect for others and respect for the school environment.

SMSC is viewed as a river that runs through everything we do as a school and there are learning opportunities within every curriculum area to 'feed into the flow'. Lessons across the age range and curriculum, provide pupils with opportunities to:

- Collaborate with each other, listen and talk to each other, take turns, share and work cooperatively;
- Debate ideas and opinions, discuss a viewpoint, agree and disagree;
- Experience positive role models;
- Have both a 'mirrors and windows' view, whereby they see themselves reflected alongside gaining insight into the lives and cultures of others;
- Explore and develop an understanding of British values, the School values and their individual values.
- Develop awareness, acceptance and respect for all people.

The explicit teaching of SMSC is primarily evident in PSHEE lessons, TPR lessons and through our assembly programme. Extra-curricular clubs, school trips, the pastoral care system and opportunities for pupil voice at Heath Mount are all also seen as key contributors to promotion of SMSC.

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities in each area of SMSC.

9. Spiritual Development

The School's provision aims to:

- assist pupils to reflect, question and explore;
- develop their capacity for critical and independent thought;
- discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences;
- encourage pupils to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference;
- enable pupils to engage in and ultimately to contribute to "the great conversation";
- engage their imaginations and feelings;
- experience moments of stillness and reflection;
- form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships;
- give pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious belief, and the way in which they affect peoples' lives;
- give pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful;
- promote their self-esteem by valuing and commending their achievements;
- encourage pupils build resilience and the capability cope with mistakes and learn from them.
- provide opportunities for them to debate, discuss and exchange views and insights;
- reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.

10. Moral Development

The School's provision aims to:

- provide a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school, enabling pupils to distinguish between right and wrong;
- provide models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts, assemblies and acts of worship;
- glean knowledge concerning moral and ethical issues in British society and globally;
- promote respect and acceptance of others, including an understanding of protected characteristics and a recognition of the unique value of every individual;
- understand that the freedom to hold faith and beliefs is protected in law;
- help pupils develop positive self-confidence and self-esteem;
- encourage pupils to develop the attitudes necessary for responsible decision making.

- enable pupils to reflect on the impact of their choices on themselves and others and be able to cope with mistakes.
- listen and respond appropriately to the views of others, being able to make informed and independent judgement;
- encourage pupils to show respect for the environment;
- promote a respect for the Law and an appreciation of the protections afforded to citizens from living under the rule of law.
- help pupils gain an understanding of how citizens can influence decision making through the democratic process.

11. Social Development

The School's provision aims to:

- foster a sense of belonging and community, with common, inclusive values which ensure that everyone, irrespective of ethnicity, learning and physical needs, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation and religion can flourish;
- help children establish an understanding of their rights and responsibilities within society;
- encourage pupils to take initiative and act responsibly, demonstrating consideration for others and a sense of how they can help on an individual, local, national and global scale;
- develop an attitude of service within the school environment and the wider community;
- help pupils begin to understand the need for social justice and a concern for those in the wider community;
- teach the value of participation in community service, charitable activities and the continued development of such initiatives.
- help pupils develop personal qualities which are valued in British society and a respect for British values and the rule of law;
- help pupils develop a readiness to celebrate others' achievements alongside their own;
- develop a willingness in pupils to co-operate with others by balancing individual and collective needs;
- offer pupils opportunities to debate social issues;

12. Cultural Development

The School's provision aims to:

- provide opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encourage pupils to reflect on their significance;
- enable pupils to discover and develop their aesthetic, creative, intellectual and physical skills;

- provide 'mirrors and windows', offering opportunities for pupils to explore their own cultural roots, traditions and values and the cultural roots, traditions and values of others;
- present authentic accounts of the attitudes, values and traditions of different cultures;
- help pupils recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence individuals and society;
- help pupils to understand, respect and appreciate other beliefs, social circumstances and cultures and their impact;
- Understand the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination;
- provide opportunities to explore what is meant by 'Britishness' and to identify with core British values. (See below).

13. Promotion of British Values

- The British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs are promoted:
 - through their being embedded in our values;
 - through specific PSHEE sessions;
 - through assemblies (whole school, section, House and year group), the curriculum, extra-curricular clubs, the pastoral care system and trips.

14. Government Advice on School Policy

- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 govern this area. Alongside the DfE's document: 'The Independent Schools Standards: guidance for independent schools 2019.
- The Regulations state that, to meet the standard for the SMSC development of pupils, the proprietor of an independent school must:
 - Actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
 - Prevent the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School;
 - Take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that, where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

- The balanced presentation of opposing views applies while pupils are in attendance at school, while they are taking part in co- or extra-curricular activities provided by, or on behalf of, the school, and in the promotion of those co- or extra-curricular activities, whether they are taking place at the school or elsewhere.
- Schools must also ensure they actively promote principles that:
 - 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 understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated, and to society more widely;
 - Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
 - Enable further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own cultures;
 - Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010; and
 - Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

15. Fundamental British values: expectations for pupils

- The Independent School's Standards: guidance for schools 2019 provides advice from the DfE for improving the SMSC development in independent schools has information on expectations for pupils. The document gives examples of the understanding and knowledge that may be expected of pupils as a result of schools meeting the standard to respect 'fundamental British values'. These include:
 - An understanding as to how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
 - An understanding that participation in elections by those opposed to democracy should be allowed by law, but the success of such candidates is undesirable for the well-being of society if it would lead to the end of democracy;

- An understanding that bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account by the people, through the democratic organs of government;
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law, and acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.

16. Implementation

- All staff and pupils at the School are expected to behave with integrity, acceptance and compassion in their dealings with one another. The School works to ensure the protection of the rights of individuals in the context of the promotion of fundamental British values.
- Examples of opportunities and activities to promote British values at the School include:
 - The promotion of British values to all students via our Curriculum provision in lessons and through enrichment activities such as Curriculum Days;
 - In lessons, pupils are encouraged to debate and discuss ideas, sharing and defending their beliefs in a way that is collaborative and supportive;
 - The School Council system offers the opportunity for pupils to participate in a democratic process and have a 'voice' within the school;
 - Teachers model positive behaviour and democratic values in their interactions with colleagues and pupils;
 - Subjects, such as art, use inspirational British people as focal points for topic work;
 - History lesson and assemblies are frequently used as vehicles through which the children are presented with examples of key moments, people or ideas from British history;
 - Lessons are utilised, when appropriate, to provide forums in which pupils can learn more about and question the notions of liberty, justice, democracy, law, governance, faith and belief systems. The School takes care to ensure that all pupils feel safe, secure and able to celebrate their own and each other's' backgrounds, beliefs and cultural practices.

17. Monitoring and Review

- There will be a formal review of this policy every two years, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.
- The effectiveness of the SMSC & British Values provision in the school is assessed on a regular basis via:
 - academic monitoring of teaching and learning ;
 - pastoral monitoring of behaviour and achievements;
 - regular discussions at INSET and staff meetings.

Governors' committee reviewing	Education Committee
Effective From	September 2024
Date last formally approved	
Period of review	Biannually
Next review date	
Person responsible for implementation and monitoring	Assistant Head
Related policies	Curriculum Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Appendix: SMSC

SMSC Requirements

Pupils' spiritual development

- 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.

Pupils' moral development

- 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.

Pupils' social development

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socioeconomic 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.

Pupils' cultural development

- 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.

The following table shows how the themes and units of work within the PSHEE Programme contribute to the different aspects of the SMSC agenda. Those listed in brackets show area where there are links, rather than explicit teaching content.

Social Development	Moral Development
Beginning and Belonging	Rights, Rules and Responsibilities
Rights, Rules and Responsibilities	Anti-bullying
My Emotions	Diversity and Communities
Family and Friends	Financial Capability
Working Together	Managing Risk
Anti-bullying	Drug Education
Diversity and Communities	Safety Contexts
Managing Risk	Planning for the Future
Personal Safety	(Family and Friends)
Sex and Relationships Education SR2, SR4, SR6 (Y7&8)	(Sex and Relationships Education SR2, SR4, SR6, Y7&8)
Healthy Lifestyles	(Working Together)
Drugs, alcohol and Tobacco	(Beginning and Belonging)
Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health	
Identity	
Planning for the Future	
Spiritual Development	Cultural Development
My Emotions	Beginning and Belonging
Working Together	Diversity and Communities
Sex and Relationships Education SR1, SR3, SR5, Y7&8)	(Rights, Rules and Responsibilities)
Managing Change	(Family and Friends)
(Sex and Relationships Education SR2, SR4, SR6)	(Anti-bullying)
	(Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco)

October 2024