



## **SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (SMSC)**

*This policy applies to the whole School and is publicly available on the School website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.*

### **Legal Status:**

Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations currently in force.

**Monitoring and review:** This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal, and the Executive Regional Director. The Advisory Governance Board will undertake a full annual review of this policy and procedures, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been implemented. This discussion will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay.

Signed:

*Amanda Woods*

Ms Amanda Woods  
Principal

*Date reviewed:* November 2017

*Date of next review:* November 2018

This policy was last reviewed in November 2017 and will next be reviewed no later than November 2018 or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed policy and it is made available to them in either a hard copy or electronic format.

**Rationale: We actively promote SMSC in our school. SMSC permeates all subjects and activities and is evidenced through the schemes of work and programmes of study along with activities which extend beyond the classroom door including those of a residential nature.** For students to benefit fully from their time at Ashwicke Hall School, we must ensure that they have the best teaching and pastoral care and they must ensure that they try to meet the expectations placed for them in work, conduct and attitude. This can best be achieved where the aims of the SMSC policy link and strengthen other policies so that the ideals of the School's ethos and mission statement become a reality for its students.

Ashwicke Hall School supports students' SMSC development and suitably prepares students for life. The whole-school community works towards building a positive climate and ethos of the School and enables students to grow and flourish, become confident individuals, and appreciate their own worth and that of others. The definitions and practices that follow are intended to clarify the ways that Ashwicke Hall School factors Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development into everyday School life. Ashwicke Hall School is a non-denominational School where students of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence with an open mind. 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 right. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children guidance about this right.

There is recognition of a broad set of common values and purposes which underpin the School curriculum and the work of Schools. These include valuing ourselves, our families and other relationships, the wider groups to which we belong, the diversity in our society and the environment in which we live. There is also a commitment to the virtues of truth, justice, honesty and a sense of duty. The curriculum promotes and sustains a thirst for knowledge and understanding

and instils a love of learning. It covers a wide range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, technical and sporting excellence.

As part of our SMSC Policy, Ashwicke Hall School believes that all children and adults have the right to live in a supportive, caring environment in which students feel safe and free from bullying and harassment that may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to special educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment or disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), and the use of discriminatory language. We plan our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHEE) education and citizenship through tutorials, assemblies and guest speakers within Advising lessons. This is to help our students acquire values and skills to enable them to develop independence and choose their path in life. Citizenship education is a key element of SMSC as it helps prepare students for life as engaged citizens and to meet their opportunities, challenges and responsibilities. It is incumbent on us to focus our policy upon the values and principles which we inculcate in our children and young people through the application of our ethos and education throughout the School.

### **Aims**

- Enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Enable students to understand what is right and wrong in their School life and life outside School;
- Encourage students 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 of the School and to society more widely;
- Enable students to take part in a range of activities requiring social skills, develop leadership skills, take on and discharge efficiently roles and responsibilities, offer help and learn to be reliable;
- Enable students to acquire knowledge and reflect on beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning;
- Actively promote principles that encourage students to respect fundamental British values such as democracy and the rule of law;
- Develop respect towards other people and diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation, and disability;
- Provide students with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England;
- Provide a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities; and
- Enable students to overcome barriers to their learning.

Our aim is to prevent any political indoctrination of students. In order to achieve this all staff must decline to discuss political issues with students. Should students raise a political issue to a member of staff, or such a conversation be within earshot of a member of staff the member of staff must politely explain that a balanced perspective must be achieved. The member of staff should not tell students what to believe/is correct. Should a member of staff be concerned that an extremist viewpoint is being expressed, regardless of the involvement of that member of staff in the discussion, then it should be reported to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

**How our School actively promotes fundamental British Values:** We actively promote fundamental British values by virtue of our approach and demonstrate how we are meeting the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002 in our provision of SMSC. Evidence of this commitment to promoting British values can be seen across the School, Prospectus, noticeboards and other documentation. We pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. We provide positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum (such as learning how democracy and the law works in Britain), through co-curricular activities (sometimes run directly by students). Our School Council ensures that all students within the School have a voice that is listened to and demonstrates how democracy works.

We ensure that students are able to understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism and radicalisation, new technology, substance misuse, knives and gangs, personal relationships and personal safety. We promote tolerance and community cohesion by helping young people understand different lifestyles and cultures. We maintain links with other Schools who serve children from different backgrounds, in order to make our students aware of the breadth of cultures which make up modern British society and to encourage them to develop a positive attitude to those with different backgrounds. Tolerance, respect and harmony between different cultural traditions

and non-discrimination against protected characteristics are encouraged and students are enabled to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.

We aim for our students to understand and appreciate the range of different cultures and faiths in modern Britain and to respect the civil and criminal law of England. Students are also encouraged to understand and have respect for the value of democracy and support for participation and decision making in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England. Our School encourages an understanding of the separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence. Students understand that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law and appreciate that living under the rule of the law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety. We do not 'promote' teachings, beliefs or opinions that conflict with our own, nor do we promote discrimination against people or groups on the basis of their belief, opinion or background.

**Preparation for Life in British Society:** In our School we develop all our students to ensure they have the values, skills and behaviours they need to get on in life. All children receive a rich provision of classroom and co-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience, which underpin success in education and future employment.

**Building Children's Resilience to Radicalisation through the Promotion of British Values:** Ashwicke Hall School builds resilience to radicalisation of its students by promoting fundamental British values. We address the prevent topic within advising lessons and we provide a safe space in which our students can discuss and understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments or views. Any discriminatory or extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine.

**Spiritual Development:** Spiritual development is associated with the search for meaning and purpose in life. It relates to a dimension of life which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses, but has much to do with feelings and emotions and attitudes and beliefs. Spiritual development is not the same as religious development, though religious education and collective worship will have particularly important roles to play. Students' spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. As their curiosity about themselves and their place in the world increases, they try to answer for themselves some of life's fundamental questions. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material well-being.

**Ashwicke Hall School promotes spiritual development through:**

- providing and encouraging a positive ethos; the values and attitudes the School identifies, upholds and fosters;
- focusing on positive 'success' rather than negative 'failure';
- giving students the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people, and growing awareness of when it is important to control emotions and feelings;
- encouraging students to explore and develop what animates and inspires themselves and others;
- giving children the opportunity to reflect and to experience times of quiet (e.g. Study Time);
- encouraging children to listen to and consider the ideas and experiences of others
- encouraging students to express innermost thoughts and feelings through art, music, literature and crafts;
- accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals;
- promoting teaching styles which value students' questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns; enable students to make connections between aspects of their learning; encourage students to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference; encouraging students to think independently;
- fostering a fascination and enjoyment in learning; and using imagination and creativity in learning.

**Moral Development:** Moral development is concerned with students' ability to make judgements about how they should behave and act, and the reasons for such behaviour. Students are encouraged to understand the need for a common code and to follow it from conviction rather than because of sanctions or consequences. It refers to their knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes in relation to what is right or wrong. From the basis of understanding the difference between right and wrong, children will develop the ability to make moral judgements and to take

responsibility for their own moral decisions. This aspect of SMSC links to our Relationships and Sex Education curriculum. (Please see our RSE Policy for more detail).

**Ashwicke Hall School promotes moral development through:**

- making it clear what kinds of behaviour are expected;
- teaching what healthy consensual relationships look like and what behaviours are unhealthy;
- enabling students to distinguish right from wrong through a clear moral code as well as respect for the civil and criminal law of England;
- taking steps to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of students they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views in the teaching of any subject in the School;
- promoting measures to prevent discrimination;
- highlighting examples of high standards of behaviour, truthfulness, integrity and honesty;
- rewarding expressions of moral insights and good behaviour;
- making an issue of breaches of agreed moral codes where they arise e.g. on television;
- modelling the principles which our School wishes to promote;
- encouraging students to take responsibility for their actions;
- adults explaining, wherever possible, why certain behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable;
- giving students opportunities across the curriculum to explore and develop moral concepts and values;
- developing an open safe learning environment in which students can express their views;
- extending children's knowledge and understanding of a range of values in society;
- developing children's ability to make moral decisions;
- having the confidence to act in accordance with their own moral principles and thinking through the consequences of their actions;
- providing opportunities for students to explore moral issues in a contemporary context;
- reinforcing our values through images, posters, classroom displays, screensavers, exhibitions and
- monitoring the success of what is provided in our School.

**Social Development:** Social development refers to the development of abilities and qualities that students need to acquire if they are to play a full and active part in society and the wider community. It also relates to the growth of knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects. Students' social development involves students acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global), and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good. They display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to make an active contribution to the democratic process in each of their communities.

**Ashwicke Hall School promotes social development through:**

- encouraging children to relate positively to others;
- encouraging students to recognise and respect social differences and similarities;
- helping students develop personal qualities which are valued in a civilised society;
- encouraging adults to set high standards in their relationships with each other;
- providing a model of purposeful and harmonious community;
- providing opportunities for engaging in the democratic process and participating in community life;
- providing a conceptual and linguistic framework within which to understand and debate social issues;
- allowing children to experience the obligations and constraints, but also the satisfaction, that goes with being a member of a group including the use of social skills and decision making in group
- exploring the way in which communities and societies function at a variety of levels
- encouraging children to take responsibility and show initiative; and
- giving children an understanding of their role within the wider community.

**Cultural Development:** Cultural development refers to the development of knowledge and understanding and the appreciation of differing cultural beliefs, customs and traditions. Students acquire a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' way of doing things and curiosity about differences. A central theme concerns the development of a sense of personal identity whilst, at the same time, acquiring awareness, understanding and

tolerance regarding the cultural traditions of others. Our School promotes cultural development by giving children opportunities to engage in a wide range of cultural activities.

**Ashwicke Hall School promotes cultural development through:**

- encouraging knowledge of the children's own cultural traditions and practices, along with those of other cultural groups within society; adopting the view that diversity makes the world a richer place;
- encouraging 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;
- identifying key values on which our School community life is based;
- furthering tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions;
- encouraging an understanding of how children can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality and to society more widely;
- presenting authentic accounts of the attitudes, values and traditions of diverse cultures;
- addressing discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria and promoting racial and other forms of equality;
- extending students' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language;
- recognising and nurturing particular gifts and talents;
- providing opportunities for students to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encouraging students to reflect on their significance;
- developing partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend students' cultural awareness, e.g. university, museum, and gallery visits;
- reinforcing our School's cultural values through displays, and advising lessons;
- auditing the quality and nature of opportunities for students to extend their cultural development across the curriculum; encouraging children to engage with a variety of cultures
- understanding and responding to cultural diversity; and monitoring the success of what is provided in our School.

**Equal opportunities:** Please refer to our Single Equalities Policy.

**Putting ideas into practice:** To ensure that student's SMSC development is effective, there are three aspects of the School which need to be considered: our School ethos; the pastoral support for students; and the curriculum.

**Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural promotion within the curriculum. Our School has a strategy to achieve 'actively promoting fundamental British values', as detailed below:** The curriculum is the framework on which a School is built and so it is through the curriculum that Schools can have a major influence. Our curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and society. Our curriculum also prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting community cohesion. The staff team must be aware of these responsibilities; know how respective curriculum areas might be used and plan accordingly; and be alert to the many every day, unplanned and incidental opportunities that can provide important starting points for discussions and learning.

**Assemblies & Advising Lessons:** Appreciating and valuing other faiths and beliefs of both groups and individuals; learning about being a member of a pluralist society and respecting and tolerating others and their belief and needs; knowing about and celebrating the historical, social and religious aspects and holidays of our own culture and that of others; celebrating each other's achievements and interests; and learning about presenting in front of a group of peers.

**English:** The studying of different texts – classical, contemporary, serious, funny can provide challenging starting points and give an appreciation of the beauty of great language and literature; drama and stories which create opportunities for moral judgements; shared activities – shared reading, group drama, corporate writing that lead to an understanding of an appreciation of the importance of the group and other people's point of view; knowledge of our language and its influence on our culture and the importance and value of other languages and cultures; and awareness of traditional tales and their cultural background.

**Mathematics:** Group work on a shared topic or investigation promoting an appreciation of the input of all members of the group; an appreciation of the inherent pattern and beauty of mathematics; The promotion of positive attitudes towards mathematics through appropriate groupings; and an understanding that mathematics has an historical and cultural base – Greek, Arabic, etc. and understanding of the role and importance of these cultures.

**I.C.T:** Working together to create a graphics project or study; researching cultures on the internet; following the Internet Access Policy; and corresponding with other Schools from different countries.

**Science:** The development of an understanding of our place in the great scheme of things by studying space or life processes; an appreciation of moral questions as scientific knowledge increases e.g. the use of animals for research; an awareness of the cultural background of science; and the study of cause and effect.

**Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Development:** Consideration of moral, environmental and citizenship issues when considering our role in caring for the environment e.g. the pollution of the planet; and supporting children to make good choices in all areas, especially their behaviour and understanding the impact of this on others.

**Social Studies:** The study of artefacts, buildings, churches etc gives children a sense of their place in the historical scheme of things. It also helps to develop an awareness of beauty and aesthetics; moral issues can be considered, for example, was it right that war was fought or that children were forced to work in factories and mines in Victorian Britain; and Studying the cultures of other times – Egyptians, Romans etc builds an awareness of the value and importance of other societies and cultures and the relative value and importance of our own. It also stresses the interdependence of cultures. The study of different localities helps our children to understand the background, way of life and values etc. of different people and cultures. For example, the Inuits (Eskimo) and their way of life and values are to a large degree the result of habitat – as is our own; tolerance of other people's differences, overcoming stereotyping, racism and prejudice can all be highlighted through the study of different peoples and their way of life; local studies will encourage an awareness of the child's place, family, home, dependency upon other individuals, people and cultures and needs in the great scheme of things; and environmental issues and concerns can be discussed e.g. recycling.

**Art:** Studying great works of art can give an insight into the culture of other people and provide a strong link with the past; art can provide a valuable tool to study the past and make social or moral comment on it; multicultural art, the art of different religions and the art of ancient societies all reinforce the value of societies other than our own and help us to appreciate their value and the value of our own; and the appreciation of great works of art and the appreciation of our own attempts helps to build up an awareness of aesthetics and gives an uplifting experience.

**Music:** Listening to music, performing, joining in with it gives pleasure, lifts spirits and has an emotional dimension that children need to experience. Music experienced in our assemblies helps the students in their spirituality; listening to and appreciating the great music of our culture and its folk music builds an important awareness of our culture and that of other lands. Music of other cultures is important for the same reasons; can be used to build an awareness of the importance of music and its place in social history and the accompanying moral and social questions that arise out of it; and group music making is an important social activity – working together and experiencing the same feelings together

**Physical Education:** Caring for our bodies and respecting the health of others; obeying the rules of the game, being a 'good sport', learning to be a good winner and a good loser, learning to take part and doing one's best is important; appreciating the aesthetic beauty of the movements of gymnastics or dance; building team spirit, being a good team member, valuing the contributions of others to the team; and learning that sport is an important element of many cultures – Ancient Greeks, Romans, the history of great sporting events such as the Olympics.

**Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education/Citizenship:** Listening to others; holding discussions leading to written work; drama and role play linked to choices; drawing pictures of feelings and emotions; and following the PSHE education pack.

**Citizenship:** Citizenship should foster students' 'keen awareness and understanding' of democracy, government and law, their skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments', and prepare students 'to take their place in society as responsible citizens'.

**Links with the Wider Community:** Visitors are welcomed into our School to speak to the students. Visits to places of worship, cultural venues such as theatres and libraries are actively encouraged. Children are taught to appreciate and take responsibility for the environment. We liaise with local community and support groups.

**Differentiation:** The above is differentiated according to the needs of each individual learner. The nature of our students' special educational needs dictates that we deliver the above policy in so far as their developmental levels allow. All Members of Staff should be aware of the importance of SMSC development and the enhancement it brings to the life of the School. They should feel free to voice related concerns and interests within the normal pattern of staff meetings. The following guidance takes account of information provided by Ofsted and DfE in relation to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 but highlights principles that are equally applicable to other issues.

Whilst we recognise there is no curriculum requirement to teach about marriage, if we do, we will ensure that our curriculum will accord with the Independent School Standards. Ashwicke Hall School believes that a balanced curriculum is one that, amongst other things, reflects the nature of the world we live in. If marriage were to be discussed in lessons, our teachers will reflect the fact that marriage for same sex couples is part of the law of this country, but that they are not required to endorse it. There is nothing in the Equal Marriage Act that inhibits the rights of teachers or Schools to express religious or philosophical views about marriage in lessons. Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights guarantees freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and religion or belief is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, teachers and schools must ensure their conduct recognises their responsibilities under those duties to others. Our teachers are expected to respect the rights of others and to respect those with different beliefs; expressing a view in an unprofessional way that involved singling out students on grounds of sexuality, or presenting extreme views without balance on a topic such as marriage for same sex couples, would be considered inappropriate.

**Related documents:** The Single Equalities Policy); Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHEE) education; Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Policies; Safeguarding Children – e-Safety, Child Protection and Safer Recruitment Policies; Relationships and Sex Education Policy, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy; Staff code of conduct; Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy.