



**St John's Church of England  
Academy**



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

**Date of Review: July 2022**

**Date of Next Review: July 2023**

**Responsible Group: School Policy**

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## **SMSC Policy**

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## Introduction

The purpose of the curriculum at St John's Church of England Academy is to prepare our children for life in the 21st Century.

Our Curriculum is focussed on ensuring that all our children have the best chance to achieve our Christian Vision of **'Belonging, Believing, Becoming'**, which is rooted in **Mark 4:30-32, 'The Parable of the Mustard Seed'** and **The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust** and **The Church of England's vision to 'Live Life in all its fullness'** rooted in **John 10:10**.

St John's Church of England Academy is an inclusive school where all people are valued and nurtured to become the best version of themselves and responsible members of God's family. We do not tolerate discrimination of any kind and our curriculum celebrates the diverse nature of our society, enabling children to embrace the world around them and encourage adherence with British values.

## Statement of intent

At St John's Church of England Academy, the pupils and their learning are at the very heart of every decision we make. This policy reflects our diverse mix of pupils and does not discriminate against any protected characteristics.

Through this policy, we will help pupils to develop an inner discipline and encourage them to not just 'follow the crowd' – they will make up their own minds and be ready to accept responsibility for what they do. They will grow through making choices and holding themselves to account for the choices they have made. They will want to be honest with themselves and with others. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education of our pupils is cross-curricular and not limited to specific SMSC lessons.

## Curriculum Drivers

Through the delivery of our curriculum, we want our children to be ready for life beyond St John's. We aspire for them to be:

- **Articulate**
- **Aspirational**
- **Curious**
- **Appreciative**

## Aims

Through the implementation of this SMSC Policy, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, caring and happy environment where each pupil is valued as an individual and can develop towards their full potential.
- Provide for each pupil a broad and balanced curriculum of high-quality, appropriate to the interests and aspirations of the individual, and encourage the development of the whole person – fulfilling the requirements of the national curriculum.
- Develop the potential of each pupil within their capabilities, recognising different needs and abilities and providing challenges and appropriate teaching at each stage of development.

- Set and maintain standards of discipline, courtesy and general moral values so that the school community can function effectively.
- Engender a sense of self-respect, independence and self-motivation – to increase the individual's capacity to accept responsibility for actions taken.
- Encourage pupils to recognise their responsibility to, and dependence on, others to help them become active, reasoning participants in a democratic society.
- Provide a non-sexist, non-racist atmosphere that fosters respect for religious and moral values linked with acceptance of other people, races, religions and lifestyles.
- Foster links between home and school to develop a partnership with parents in the education of their children.

## **1. Legal framework**

1.1 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'

1.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy (DGAT)
- E-safety Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and First Aid Policy (DGAT)
- Equal Opportunities Policy (DGAT)

## **2. Guiding principles**

### **Spiritual development**

2.1 The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:

- Ability to be reflective about their beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life.
- Knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings and values.
- Sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them.
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning.
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences.

### **Moral development**

2.2 The moral development of pupils is shown by their:

- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, readily apply this understanding in their own lives and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- Understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions.
- Interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, and their ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.

## **Social development**

2.3 The social development of pupils 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 community and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- Ability to use modern communication technology, including mobile technology, the internet and social media, safely.
- Acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The pupils should also develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in, and contribute positively to, life in modern Britain

## **Cultural development**

2.4 The cultural development of pupils is shown by their:

- Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others.
- Understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within the school, and further afield, as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain.
- Knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain.
- Willingness to participate in, and respond positively to, artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities.
- Interest in exploring, improving their understanding of, and showing respect for, different faiths and cultures.
- Understanding, acceptance, respect for, and celebration of, diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.
- Ability to recognise and value the things shared across cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities.

## **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, collective worship, pastoral sessions and PSHE education.
- All areas of the curriculum will draw examples from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.
- In order to develop a strong sense of identity in our pupils, we will use classroom discussion to enable them to:
  - Talk about their experiences and feelings.
  - Express and clarify personal ideas and beliefs.
  - Speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying and death.

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- Share thoughts and feelings with other people.
- Explore relationships with friends, family and others.
- Consider the needs and behaviour of others.
- Show empathy.
- Develop self-esteem and respect for others.
- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Develop the skills and attitudes that enable them to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally, e.g. empathy, respect, open-mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness, etc.

Many areas across the curriculum provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Listen and talk to each other.
- Learn to treat all as equals, accepting people who are different because of physical and learning difficulties.
- Agree and disagree.
- Experience good role models.
- Take turns and share equipment.
- Work co-operatively and collaboratively.

We may 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
  - Pupil conferencing
  - Debating
  - P4C
  - Collective Worship
  - Writing experiences – Poetry, persuasive writing etc.
  - Thrive
  - ELSA
- Establishing monitoring roles for pupils, e.g. class monitors, lunchtime leaders, special helpers, register monitors, collective worship monitors and librarians, to allow pupils opportunities to deliver messages and look after younger pupils
- Appointing playground leaders
- Voting on charities to support
- Issuing pupil exit questionnaires, in particular for pupils leaving the school, for example, those moving onto the next stage in their education
- Writing balanced arguments in English lessons
- Providing pupils with opportunities to take part in debates and public speaking activities

We may use the following methods to help pupils develop an understanding of the rule of law:

- Setting high expectations for attendance, punctuality and behaviour

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- Setting classroom and school rules
- Teaching pupils about health and safety laws, including e-safety laws, relevant to the school setting
- Teaching pupils about the roles of all those who help us, 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
- Encouraging pupils to behave appropriately at mealtimes.

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, European Day of Languages
- Arranging visits to places of worship
- Teaching about different beliefs and cultures
- Exploring morals through lessons, stories and collective worship
- Arranging visits from various religious leaders
- RE lessons for in-depth religious education study

Additional practical activities to encourage pupils' SMSC development include:

- Working together in different groupings and situations.
- Hearing music from different composers, cultures and genres.
- Meeting people from different cultures and countries.
- Participating in a variety of different educational visits.
- Participating in live performances.
- Studying literature and art from different cultures, supported by visits from writers and artists and participation in workshops.
- Hearing and seeing live performances by professional actors, dancers and musicians.
- Learning songs from different cultures and playing a range of instruments including steel pans and samba instruments.
- Making and evaluating food from other countries.
- Studying the contributions to society that certain famous people have made.
- Working with Foresters' Forest to develop a sense of the local area

Teachers will help pupils' SMSC development by:

- Encouraging teamwork in PE and games.
- Encouraging an appreciation of, and respect for, the work and performance of other pupils, regardless of ability.
- Using collective worship themes to explore important aspects of both British heritage and other cultures, e.g. festival days, the patron saints and global events.

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#### 4. Community links

The school has strong links with the wider community and develops these links by reaching out to the community through the following activities:

- Fundraising activities.
- Hosting an annual school play.
- Bag packing and singing in the local supermarket
- Visits to the local hospice and old peoples' care home
- Taking part in Young Voices
- Working with Foresters' Forest
- Supporting local food bank
- Sponsored events – DGAT Readathon
- Sponsoring endangered animals across the globe

#### 5. SMSC matrix

The SMSC matrix located in the appendices shows where spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, respectively, are embedded into subjects and provides evidence of their inclusion.

#### 6. Promoting fundamental British values

We will take the following actions to promote fundamental British values:

- Including in suitable parts of the curriculum age-appropriate material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain compared to other countries.
- Teaching pupils a broad and balanced international history.
- Representing the cultures of all our pupils within the curriculum.
- Teaching a wide range of English and non-English literature.
- Commemorating World War 1 and 2.
- Demonstrating the historical importance of the Commonwealth.
- Ensuring that all pupils have a voice that is listened to.
- Demonstrating how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes, for example, via a school council.
- Using general and local elections to hold mock elections and provide pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view.
- Using teaching resources from a wide variety of sources to help pupils learn about and understand a range of faiths.
- Using extra-curricular activities to promote fundamental British values.

Through our SMSC programme, we will:

- Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.

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- 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 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.

By promoting fundamental British values through SMSC education, we will provide pupils with:

- An understanding of how they can influence decision making through the democratic process.
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects them and is essential for their wellbeing and safety.
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and while some public bodies, for example the police, can be held to account by parliament, others maintain independence, for example, the court system.
- An understanding that their freedom to choose and hold faiths and beliefs is protected by law.
- An acceptance that people of different faiths and beliefs to themselves (and those with no faiths or beliefs) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be subject to prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

We listen to the views of our pupils and their parents. We operate an open-door policy for the sharing of views and have a formal system in place including:

- An annual pupil questionnaire.
- Pupil/teacher meetings.
- An annual parents' questionnaire.
- Parents' evenings/meetings.

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

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- The monitoring of teaching and learning and work scrutiny by the subject leader 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 a bi-annual basis by the Headteacher and subject leader.

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Charity events								
School council								
<b>Key considerations</b>							<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
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?								

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