



**NATIONAL ONLINE SCHOOL**

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

Approved by TCES Operational Board on behalf of

Thomas Keaney, CEO and Schools' Proprietor

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This policy applies to the TCES National Online School

## Contents

Introduction.....	3
Desired outcomes .....	4
Regulations and outcomes .....	4
Definitions .....	4
Pupils should .....	4
To achieve the above the school will endeavour to: .....	5
(2b) Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the law .....	5
To achieve the above the school will endeavour to: .....	6
(2c) Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life .....	6
Definitions .....	6
To achieve the above the school will endeavour to: .....	7
(2d) Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions & services in England .....	8
Pupils should .....	8
To achieve the above the school will endeavour to: .....	8
(2e) Assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions .....	9
.....	9
Pupils should .....	9
To achieve the above the school will endeavour to: .....	10
Promoting Fundamental British values .....	10
Potential resources .....	12

## Introduction

The following are definitions of each area of SMSC development.

**Spiritual development** – the development of the non-material element of a human being which animates and sustains us and, depending on our point of view, either ends or continues in some form when we die. It is about the development of a sense of identity, self-worth, personal insight, meaning and purpose. It is about the development of a pupil’s ‘spirit’. Some people may call it the development of a pupil’s ‘soul’; others as the development of ‘personality’ or ‘character’.

**Moral development** - enabling pupils to build a framework of moral values, aligned with the law of the land, which regulates their personal behaviour. It is also about the development of pupils' understanding of society's shared and agreed values. It is about understanding that there are issues where there is disagreement and it is also about understanding that society's values change. Moral development is about gaining an understanding of the range of views and the reasons for the range. It is also about developing an opinion about the different views.

**Social development** - young people working effectively with others and participating successfully in the community as a whole. It is about the development of the skills and personal qualities necessary for living and working together in harmony and making a positive contribution to the school community and wider society. It is about functioning effectively in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society and developing into a tolerant and helpful human being. It involves growth in knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects. This includes understanding people as well as understanding society's institutions, structures and characteristics, economic and political principles and organisations, roles and responsibilities, and life as a citizen, parent or worker in a community. It also involves the development of the inter-personal skills necessary for successful relationships.

**Cultural development** - helping pupils to develop an understanding of their own culture and other cultures in their town, region and in the country as a whole. It is about understanding cultures represented in Europe and elsewhere in the world. It is about understanding and feeling comfortable in a variety of cultures and being able to operate in the emerging world culture of shared experiences provided by television, art, theatre, travel and the internet. It is about understanding that cultures are always changing and coping with change. Promoting pupils' cultural development is intimately linked with schools' attempts to value cultural diversity and prevent racism.

## **Aim**

The National Online School aims to play a very influential part in the personal development of our pupils, and it is important that this is completed in a manner that is beneficial to the pupils. The school encourages an ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected. The school will do all they can to help their pupils develop into self-assured, confident, happy, positive young people who are developing their selfknowledge.

Independent schools are required to meet the Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) regulations as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003. There are five parts to the SMSC regulations, which are shown below:

- 2a) Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence
- 2b) Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the law

- 2c) Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life
- 2d) Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England
- 2e) Assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions

## Desired Outcomes

The National Online School has expectations of the kinds of behaviour/abilities/understanding that can be achieved in pupils as a result of schools ethos and value based approach to education. These expectations are outlined below within each regulation

## Regulations and Outcomes

(2a) Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence

## Definitions

**Self-knowledge** – Knowledge about strengths, weaknesses, and character.

**Self-esteem** – Being able to appreciate yourself, your strengths and character.

**Self-confidence** – Being able to trust your own capabilities, and feeling sure of yourself.

## Pupils should

- Respect for themselves and for others.
- Awareness of their own and others' beliefs, feelings, and values.
- Develop a set of values, principles, and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour.
- Ability to articulate their feelings and justify them through discussion, debate, and presentations to others.
- Readiness to question things that could limit their self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence – for example, lack of aspiration, discrimination (such as sexism, racism, etc), injustice, bullying, and so on.
- Acquire the skills to be self-reliant and work independently or in a team.
- A readiness to take on responsibility for their own actions.

- Value a non-material dimension to life and consider the questions at the heart of existence (such as who am I, where am I going?).
- An appreciation of the intangible – for example, beauty, truth, love, goodness, order – as well as for mystery, paradox, and ambiguity.
- An increasing ability to reflect, and to learn from this reflection.

### **To achieve the above the school will endeavour to:**

- Promote teaching styles which value pupils' questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas, and concerns.
- Encourage teachers to act as role models of the values desired in pupils.
- Ensure an environment is created where every child may reach their potential regardless of gender, race, disability, or other equalities issues.
- Help pupils to be aware of their potential and support them to achieve it.
- Support and encourage religious/non-religious beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to the pupils.
- Provide opportunities for spiritual development through learning outside the classroom, for example themed assemblies, drama, music, art, virtual visits to museums, historic buildings.
- Encourage pupils to explore and critically analyse what interests and inspires themselves and others.
- Encourage pupils to reflect and learn from reflection.
- Encourage individual endeavour and celebrate achievement and success, both within and outside the classroom, such as through drama, sports, music, and outdoor pursuits.
- Encourage pupils to work and cooperate as part of a team.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills and challenge so they can take care of themselves and others and develop self-reliance.

### **(2b) Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the law**

Students should have:

- Understanding of and respect for the laws of the land.
- Ability to distinguish right from wrong, based on a knowledge of their own values, those widely held by society, and the laws of the land.
- An understanding that 'society' is held together by a communal understanding of right and wrong, which may change over time.

- Ability to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions, and the confidence to act consistently in accordance with agreed principles, and especially to understand the impact that their own actions can have on others.
- Respect for others' needs, interests and feelings, as well as their own, and a desire to explore these.
- Ability to make responsible and reasoned judgements on dilemmas of right and wrong.
- Willingness and confidence to express their views on ethical issues and personal values.
- An ability to respond appropriately to the immoral and the illegal.
- An understanding of the need to review and reassess their values, codes, and principles in the light of experience.

### **To achieve the above the school will endeavour to:**

- Teach pupils how today's legal system has evolved and why it is important and help them understand the law and the importance of abiding by it.
- Provide a clear framework of values and behaviours which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school, with teachers as role models.
- Inform parents of school ethos and procedures so that what is learnt at school can be supported at home, and ensure this ethos aligns with the law of the land.
- Give pupils opportunities across the curriculum to explore and develop moral concepts and values, such as right and wrong, justice, personal rights, and responsibilities.
- Reward good insight and behaviour.
- Teach pupils about citizenship, and the importance of being a good citizen.
- Discuss in an informed and balanced way breaches of agreed moral codes where they arise, and their impact on society and themselves.
- Provide models of virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts, assemblies, relevant role models, and acts of worship.
- Reinforce the importance of a cohesive, harmonious, law-abiding society through images, posters, classroom displays, exhibitions, etc.
- Address discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, and other criteria, and promote racial and other forms of equality.

## **(2c) Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life**

### **Definitions**

**Community** - Community in this sense refers to several different communities. It refers to family and extended family; the school community; pupils' faith and cultural communities; the local area community; the national community; and the global community. In a wider sense, it can also include all living things and the environment.

**Contribution to community life** – Making a positive contribution to community life is about playing a part in and feeling a sense of belonging to the various communities described above: pupils can do this by taking on responsibilities, contributing to the decision making process, and participating in and contributing to community events.

Students should:

- Show respect for people, living things, property, and the environment.
- Work effectively and respectfully with other pupils.
- Share their own views and opinions with others, and work towards understanding and cohesion.
- Participate in activities relevant to the communities they belong to.
- Take part in democratic processes available to them, for example, voting or running for a student council.
- Adjust to a range of social contexts by appropriate and sensitive behaviour.
- Develop the ability to live alongside those from different cultures and beliefs.
- Appreciate the rights and responsibilities of individuals within the wider social setting.
- Reflect on their own contribution to society.
- Understand how societies function and are organised in structures such as the family, the school and local and wider communities.
- Understand the notion of interdependence in an increasingly complex society, and also understand that communities and societies function at a variety of levels.
- Know about sections of society and other people less fortunate than themselves, and what they can do to help.

### **To achieve the above the school will endeavour to:**

- Foster a sense of community, with common and inclusive values which ensure that everyone, irrespective of ethnic origin, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and religious or non-religious beliefs, can flourish.
- Encourage pupils to work co-operatively.

- Provide positive group activities, for example, through assemblies, team activities, residential experiences, school theatre and music productions where possible.
- Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions, for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour.
- School linking or partnership work to give pupils the chance to mix with pupils from different areas/cultures/faith.
- Help pupils to develop personal qualities which are valued in society, for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference and sound moral principles.
- Provide opportunities for participating in different communities – for example, religious, cultural, local and global.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility.
- Ensure that through lessons and other formal and informal settings opportunities are provided for pupils to demonstrate initiative, develop their interests, and organise activities for themselves and others.

## **(2d) Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions & services in England**

### **Definitions**

**Broad general knowledge** – It is important for the pupils to have an understanding of the main local and national public institutions and services in England, what they are for, and how they can be used.

**Public institutions** – Local and national organisations that are wholly or partly funded by taxpayers funds such as Parliament, police, hospitals, libraries, schools, universities, post offices, county councils, job centres, museums, etc.

**Public services** – Services provided by public institutions, contractors, and the Government for the benefit of citizens, for example, childcare, transport, refuse collection, education, healthcare and welfare support.

### **Pupils should:**

- A thorough understanding of British public institutions and services along with knowledge of how to use them and willingness to do so.
- Understand what the public institutions and services do for people throughout the country.
- Take part in democratic processes, for example, voting for or joining a student council.



- Understand how citizens can express their views through the democratic process so they can influence decision makers.
- Appreciate the rights and responsibilities of individuals within the wider social setting
- Understand the strengths and advantages of democracy and how democracy works in the context of Britain and Europe in contrast to other forms of government.

### **To achieve the above the school will endeavour to:**

- Teach pupils about democracy and citizenship, and the importance of being a good citizen.
- Ensure that all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to.
- Ensure that pupils are aware of their rights and the rights of others as human beings.
- Teach pupils about what public institutions and services are available, what they are for, and how they are funded.
- Provide positive and effective links with the world of work (for example, shadowing, work experience, and visits from professionals) and the wider community (for example school visits, including to public institutions, taking part in community events).
- Provide opportunities for pupils to learn about and engage in local and national democratic processes, including having democratic processes within the school such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils.

## **(2e) Assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions**

### **Definitions:**

**Appreciation** – Seeing the value of something or someone.

**Respect** – To regard something or someone with esteem and appreciation.

**Culture** - Culture is about the factors that are common to communities, such as customs, traditions, dress, food, and so on. It can be examined from both a historical and a societal perspective. While culture is therefore different to faith, the two are interlinked, and influence each other. There can be different faiths within one culture, and different cultures within one faith.

**Tolerance** – Tolerance does not imply 'putting up with'. It is about understanding and respecting other people's right to hold their own values and views, whether we agree with them or not.

**Harmony** – Peace and agreement. Harmony has a significant positive impact on relationships.

### **Pupils should**

- An ability to recognise and understand their own cultural principles and values, and the dynamic and developmental nature of these.
- An understanding of the influences which have shaped their own cultural heritage.
- An ability to appreciate cultural diversity and accord dignity and respect to other people's values and beliefs, to challenge racism, and to value race equality.
- Tolerance of people with different cultural, religious, and non-religious beliefs.
- Ability to interact positively with people of different cultural, religious, and nonreligious beliefs.

## **To achieve the above the school will endeavour to:**

- Provide opportunities for pupils to explore their own cultural assumptions and values.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts, and other cultural events and encourage pupils to reflect on their significance.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to mix with children from other cultures, for example through school linking programmes.
- Give pupils the opportunity to explore different values, beliefs, and cultures through a variety of approaches, including discussion and debate, in order to gain understanding.
- Present authentic accounts of the attitudes, values, and traditions of diverse cultures.
- Develop partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend pupils' cultural awareness, for example, theatre, museum, concert and gallery visits, resident artists, and foreign exchanges.
- Audit the quality and nature of opportunities for pupils to extend their cultural development across the curriculum, particularly developing an understanding of the cultures of the UK.

## **Promoting Fundamental British values**

The National Online School will 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.

Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values. Attempts to promote systems that undermine fundamental British values would be completely at odds with the National Online School Group's duty to provide SMSC.

National Online School will:

- Enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence.
- Enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- Encourage students 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 students 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 students 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.

The list below describes the understanding and knowledge expected of pupils as a result of National Online School promoting fundamental British values.

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process.
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety.
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence.
- An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law.
- An acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

Actions that National Online School will take include but are not limited to the following:

- Include in suitable parts of the curriculum, as appropriate for the age of pupils, material on the strengths, advantages, and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain, in contrast to other forms of government in other countries.
- Ensure that all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to and demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes such as a student council whose members are voted for by the pupils.

- Use opportunities such as general or local elections to hold mock elections to promote fundamental British values and provide pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view.
- Use teaching resources from a wide variety of sources to help pupils understand a range of faiths.
- Consider the role of extra-curricular activity, including any run directly by pupils, in promoting fundamental British values.

## Potential resources

There are a number of resources which can be very helpful for promoting pupils' SMSC development. A selection of these is shown below. Some will be more appropriate for certain schools than others as different schools will have different requirements:

- [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Communitycohesion](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Communitycohesion)
- School Linking Network - [www.schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk](http://www.schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk)
- Ofsted maintained school guidance on SMSC - [www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofstedhome/Publications-and-research/Browse-allby/Education/Curriculum/Religiouseducation/Primary/Promoting-and-evaluatingpupils-spiritual-moral-social-andcultural-development](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofstedhome/Publications-and-research/Browse-allby/Education/Curriculum/Religiouseducation/Primary/Promoting-and-evaluatingpupils-spiritual-moral-social-andcultural-development)
- National curriculum - <http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/>
- Council for Subject Associations - [www.subjectassociation.org.uk/index.php](http://www.subjectassociation.org.uk/index.php)
- NASACRE - [www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk)
- Section 78 of the Education Act 2002
- The Prevent strategy 2011: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventstrategy2011](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventstrategy2011)