



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL POLICY

We recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve.

Legal Status: Complies with Part 2, paragraph 5. Of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014.

Applies to: Whole School, including Early Years

Availability: This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways:

- through staff shared areas and;
- on request, a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster.

The Proprietors will undertake an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Ian Thorpe
Headmaster, Downsend School

Context

Downsend School provides a caring, disciplined environment that encourages excellence and seeks to enable children to take responsibility for their own lives.

Rationale

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the child is recognised as being of fundamental importance for the education of all children by staff of our school. It is taught through all subjects of the curriculum and, in particular, RE and PSHE. It supports all areas of learning and can contribute to the child/student's motivation to learn. It is recognised that such development will be most successful when the values and attitudes promoted by the staff provide a model of behaviour for all pupils. In later years it can enrich the individual's appreciation of life's experiences and their relationships with others.

As part of our SMSC Policy, we believe that all children and adults have the right to live in a supportive, caring environment in which pupils 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. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour.

The aims of our SMSC Policy are to:

- enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- enable pupils to understand what is right and wrong in their school life and life outside school
- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and contribute to the school, local and wider communities
- 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
- acquire knowledge and are able to reflect on beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning
- 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
- encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- develop respect towards diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation, and disability
- provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England
- precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school
- respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities, provided by the school, including, for example an appreciation of theatre, music and literature
- overcome barriers to their learning

We ensure that pupils (as appropriate to their age) are able to understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism, new technology, substance misuse, knives and gangs, personal relationships and personal safety.

We provide positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and through interactions with teachers and other adults for our pupils. Our range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities available to pupils through the curricular and extra-curricular programme, and their participation in these opportunities.

We plan our, personal, social and health education and citizenship through; form time, assemblies and 'circle time' to help our pupils acquire values and skills to enable them to develop independence and choose their path in life.

We aim for our pupils to understand and appreciate the range of different cultures and faiths in modern democratic Britain. We use our schemes of work and other plans which enable pupils to develop an understanding of public services and institutions and to take their place in modern democratic British society. We provide a range of quality opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in school and make a positive contribution to the school, local and wider communities.

We also take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that political issues are brought to the attention of pupils

- while they are in attendance at the school;
- while they are taking part an extra-curricular activities which are provided or organized by or on behalf of the school; or
- in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere;
- so that they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

In our school we plan and provide effectively in order to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSHE and religious education make a strong contribution. Pupils are led towards distinguishing right from wrong and towards acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. In addition our school

- leads pupils towards becoming confident and positive contributors to their community and effective users of its services and facilities according to their maturity;
- enables pupils to gain insights into the origins and practices of their own cultures and into those of the wider community;
- takes steps to ensure that the pupils appreciate racial and cultural diversity and avoid and resist racism.

School Ethos

The values and attitudes promoted by the staff influence the behaviour and attitudes within the school. The quality of relationships and the atmosphere within the school reflect an appreciation of their shared values.

General Aims

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

Definitions

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. The term 'spiritual' need not be synonymous with 'religious'. All areas of the curriculum should contribute to the spiritual development of pupils.

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Sustain their self-esteem in their learning experience
- Develop their capacity for critical and independent thought
- Foster their emotional life and express their feelings
- Experience moments of stillness and reflection
- Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences
- Form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
- Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life
- Recognise and reflect on Christian approaches to Spiritual Development

Moral Development

Moral development is concerned with pupils' ability to make judgements about how they should behave and act, and the reasons for such behaviour. It refers to their knowledge, understanding, values and attitudes in relation to what is right or wrong.

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the unique value of each individual
- Recognise the challenge of Jesus' teaching

- Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others
- Gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes
- Take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others
- Distinguish between right and wrong
- Show respect for the environment
- Make informed and independent judgments

Social Development

Social development refers to the development of abilities and qualities that pupils need to acquire if they are to play a full and active part in society. It also relates to the growth of knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects.

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity
- Learn about service in the school and wider community
- Begin to understand the Christian imperative for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged

Cultural Development

Cultural development refers to the development of knowledge and understanding and the appreciation of differing cultural beliefs, customs and traditions. 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.

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence individuals and society
- Recognise Christianity as a world faith
- Develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions

Fundamental British Values

Fundamental British values are democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

What is Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development?

Spiritual Development is about:

- The non-physical aspect of a person concerned with profound thoughts, relating particularly to Christianity and other religious faiths
- That which moves people as well as experiences and emotions

- A sense of purpose, awe, wonder and mystery
- Insights into a personal existence which are of enduring worth and valuing a non-material dimension to life
- The relationship between belief and behaviour and a sense of heightened perception or awareness
- A sense of being part of a greater whole as well as a search for meaning and purpose
- The attribution of meaning to experience

Moral development is about:

- Knowing of the codes and conventions of conduct agreed by society
- Having the will to behave morally as a point of principle and being able to articulate attitudes and values
- Recognising the moral dimension to situations and developing a set of socially acceptable values and principles
- Recognising that values and attitudes change over time
- Making judgements on issues by applying moral principles, insights and reasoning
- Taking responsibility for ones' own actions and understanding the consequences of actions for self and others
- Behaving consistently in accordance with principles and recognising the greater needs which extend beyond self-interest

Social development is about:

- The progressive acquisition of the competencies and qualities needed to play a full part in society
- Understanding of the institutions, structures, processes of society and of how individuals relate to each other
- Being able to adjust to a range of social contexts by appropriate and sensitive behaviour and being able to make a personal contribution to the well-being of groups
- The ability to exercise responsibility and initiative
- Being able to participate cooperatively and productively in the community
- Knowing how societies function and are organised as well as understanding how what is learnt in the curriculum relates to life in society
- Being able to take on the roles of team leader and team worker

Cultural development is about:

- Understanding of beliefs, customs, values, knowledge and skills which form the basis for identity and cohesion in society
- Recognition of and respect for the rights of others to exercise a cultural influence and knowledge of the nature and roots of cultural traditions
- The key features of major cultural groups within society and personal response and accomplishment
- The capacity to relate what is learnt to an appreciation of wider cultural aspects of society
- Developing and strengthening the cultural interests of pupils and exposing pupils to a breadth of stimuli in order to allow them to develop new interests

- Extending horizons beyond the immediate to the highest artistic, musical and literary achievements
- Understanding the diversity of religious, social, aesthetic, ethnic and political traditions and practices and being able to evaluate the quality and worth of cultural achievements

Promoting Fundamental British Values is about:

- Educating pupils that while different people may hold different opinions about 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to our laws
- School aims and ethos support the rule of English civil and criminal laws and do not undermine our society. Pupils are made aware of the difference between law of the land and religious law
- Challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values;
- Enabling pupils to develop self-knowledge, esteem and confidence
- Encouraging students to accept responsibility for behaviour and to contribute positively to both the school and wider community
- Encouraging and fostering respect for others, for democracy and support for democratic processes, understanding how citizens can influence decision making through this process
- Developing appreciation of the protection of living under rule of law extends to individuals and is essential for their well-being and safety
- Understanding the separation of power between executive and judiciary and that while some public bodies (police and army) can be held to account through Parliament, others such as courts remain independent
- Understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law and also; that others with different faiths and beliefs (or none) should be accepted and tolerated
- Identifying and combatting discrimination
- Refer also to 'Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools' DfE-00679-2014 Nov 14

Putting ideas into practice

To ensure that the things described in these statements can happen, there are three aspects or levels of the school which need to be considered:

1. The **ethos** of the school, which creates the climate within which Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development can flourish. This is described well in the school aims
2. The **pastoral support** for students which should reflect these aims, and creates a deliberate structure through which the care and concern for pupils can be given
3. The **curriculum**, which sets out to ensure that there are opportunities to introduce and explore the elements of SMSC there this is appropriate

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.

Teachers must:

- be aware of these responsibilities

- know how respective curriculum areas might be used
- plan accordingly
- be alert to the many every day, unplanned and incidental opportunities that can provide important starting points

Teaching and Organisation

Development in SMSC takes place across all curriculum areas, within activities that encourage pupils to recognise the spiritual dimension of their learning, reflect on the significance of what they are learning, and to recognise any challenges that there may be to their own attitude and lifestyle.

All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

Class discussions and circle time will give pupils opportunities to:

- Talk about personal experiences and feelings
- Express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs
- Speak about difficult events, eg bullying, death etc
- Share thoughts and feelings with other people
- Explore relationships with friends/family/others
- Consider others' needs and behaviour
- Show empathy
- Develop self-esteem and a respect for others
- Develop a sense of belonging
- Develop the skills and attitudes that enable pupils to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally — e.g. empathy, respect, open mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness

Many curriculum areas provide opportunities to:

- Listen and talk to each other
- Learn an awareness of treating all as equals
- Agree and disagree
- Take turns and share equipment
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively

Links with the wider community

1. Visitors are welcomed into school
2. Links with the Church are fostered through links with the local churches
3. The development of a strong home-school link is regarded as very important, enabling parents and teachers to work in an effective partnership to support the pupil
4. Pupils will be taught to appreciate their local environment and to develop a sense of responsibility to it

Monitoring and Evaluation

Provision for SMSC is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. This is achieved by:

- Heads of Department identify aspects within their subjects to be included in teacher planning. They also monitor teacher plans and their evaluations and assessments
- Heads of Department will monitor resource provision, identifying shortfalls
- The Headmaster shall have oversight of this policy and monitor the provision of SMSC

Opportunity for including social, moral, spiritual and cultural policy within the curriculum (not exhaustive)

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
- Exposure to great literature and poetry and its place within a culture – appreciating moral or social aspects e.g. Dickens social commentary or knowing that we can learn a lot about other cultures from its writing
- 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 and 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, for example Greek, Arabic, Egyptian as well as understanding of the role and importance of these cultures

I.C.T. and Computing

- For example, by working together to create a graphic design or study and researching religious artefacts on the website

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

Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Development

- Consideration of moral, environmental and citizenship issues when considering our role in caring for the environment e.g. efficient ways of feeding the world, intensive farming and the pollution of the planet
- Health, drugs, smoking – an understanding of the social and scientific issues involved and an awareness of everyone's point of view

Design Technology

- The aesthetic aspect of good design is an important area, as is the question 'How will this affect the environment?'
- Appreciating design in nature
- The study of technologies from different cultures – historical and geographical – and how these have evolved provides important lessons in cultural awareness
- Group working – sharing of equipment and designing together
- Promoting equality of opportunity and providing an awareness of areas that have gender issues e.g. activities that are historically female such as Textiles, encouraging girls to use equipment that has been traditionally male dominated

History

- 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, or that Anne Frank was forced into hiding
- 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
- History of democracy, elections and the right to vote

Geography

- The study of different localities helps children to understand the background, way of life and values etc. of different people and cultures
- 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
- Environmental issues and concerns can be discussed – what are the effects and the issues involved in urbanising an area

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 for example, what do the people in works by Lowry tell us about the social conditions of the time
- Multicultural art, the art of different religions, 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
- 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 services and assemblies helps the pupils 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
- Music of the fields, sea shanties, slave songs etc. 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
- 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
- Learning that sport is an important element of many cultures – Ancient Greeks, Romans, the history of great sporting events such as the Olympics or the Ashes
- Appreciating that different individuals or groups have different skills because of their background or habitat e.g. Austrian skiers, Dutch speed skaters

Personal, Social, Health Education

- Listening to others
- Holding debates and discussions leading to written work
- Drama and role play linked to choices
- Drawing pictures of feelings and emotions
- Peer mentoring, emphasising with others and their feelings

Religious Education

- The exploration of moral and spiritual questions through discussion
- 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 the historical, social and religious aspects of our own culture and that of others

Sex and Relationships

If marriage were to be discussed in lessons, we would expect teachers to reflect the fact that marriage for same sex couples is part of the law of this country, but there is no requirement on them to endorse it. 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. 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 pupils on grounds of sexuality, or presenting extreme views without balance on a topic such as marriage for same sex couples, would be considered inappropriate.

Other Associated Policies and Procedures

- Equality & Diversity
- Equal Opportunities
- Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education (PSHCE)
- Sex & Relationships Education (SRE)
- Curriculum Policies & Documents