

Social, Moral, Spiritual & Cultural Policy



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1.1. Introduction

The Education Act (1996) sets education within the context of the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students. These dimensions underpin the curriculum and the ethos of the Academy. Their importance is reinforced by their place in the inspection framework for schools which derives its authority from the Education (Schools) Act, 1992. They apply not only to RE and collective worship but to every area of the curriculum. The Academy recognises it must take opportunities which exist in the curriculum to develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

The academy is a community where students will find acceptance for themselves as unique individuals. However, students will gain cultural awareness, respect and tolerance of those of other faith backgrounds. The diversity of spiritual traditions will be recognised, and students will be given the opportunity explore alternative views.

Students will be encouraged to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, along with high standards of personal behaviour. Sybil Andrews Academy will place a strong emphasis on building positive, caring attitudes towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals and showing respect for students and their families. The school community will be a place where students will learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. Students should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate students' work and achievements.

The five general aims SMSC at the Academy are to:

- ensure that Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural issues are embedded throughout the school curriculum in a consistent way.
- give each student a range of opportunities to reflect upon and discuss their beliefs, feelings and responses to personal experiences.
- enable students to develop an understanding of their individual and group identity.
- provide students the opportunity to begin to develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment and an appreciation of the many cultures that now enrich our society.
- give each student the opportunity to explore social and moral issues, and develop a sense of social and moral responsibility.

1.2. Spiritual Development

The potential for spiritual development is open to everyone and need not be confined to the development of religious beliefs or conversion to a particular faith. The term needs to be

seen as applying to something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and/or expressed through everyday language, Spiritual growth is concerned with:

- i. assisting students to develop personal and shared beliefs;
- ii. recognising the wonders and mysteries of the natural world which may lead to questions about the existence of a divine creator;
- iii. recognising human achievements and exploring the possibility that inner resources can help people to deal with everyday experiences;
- iv. the search for meaning and purpose in life;
- v. recognising and valuing one's own worth and that of others;
- vi. creativity and the expression of thoughts and feelings through art, music, literature, human movement and crafts;
- vii. exercising imagination, intuition and insight;
- viii. appreciating or being moved by beauty or kindness;
- ix. an awareness of when it is important to control emotions and when it is appropriate to express them;
- x. self-knowledge.

The Academy will encourage students to: recognise the existence of others as independent from themselves; reflect on experiences; question and explore the meaning of experiences; evaluate a range of possible responses and interpretations; and develop and apply personal views and insights.

1.3. Moral Development

Personal morality combines the beliefs and values of individuals, those of the social, cultural and religious groups to which people belong and the laws and customs of the wider society.

The Academy will encourage students to: tell the truth; keep promises; respect the rights and property of others; act considerately towards others; help those less fortunate than themselves; take responsibility for their own actions; and exercise self-discipline. The Academy will reject: bullying; cheating; deceit; cruelty; irresponsibility; and dishonesty.

Ideally, students should understand the value of rules and act upon them out of conviction, rather than from fear of getting into trouble.

1.4. Cultural Development

The Academy is committed to preparing students to develop an empathetic understanding of aspects of their own and other cultural environments, be these religious, social, aesthetic or ethnic. The Academy aims to counteract bias and appreciate, value and celebrate the achievements of others and to prepare students for life in a multicultural society. It is recognised that students must experience other cultures in order to understand them fully. Where the local cultural environment does not offer a sufficiently broad experience the Academy is committed to providing opportunities not only through the curriculum, but also

through educational visits at home and abroad and in-school events led by different cultural groups.

1.5. Social Development

The Academy is committed to working with the home and the community to prepare students for relating to others in different social settings, taking responsibility, exercising initiative, working effectively in groups and participating co-operatively and productively in the Academy and the wider community. The Academy is further committed to promoting an empathetic understanding of how societies function and are organised in structures such as the family, the school and local and wider communities.

It is the function of all curriculum areas to contribute to the students' social development supported by experience in Academy clubs, societies and teams, and through educational visits and in-school events. Students will be encouraged to use their talents to compete in a fair and generous manner, appreciating the ability of others, showing determination and team spirit.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to establish a policy and procedure for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and to monitor the effects of the procedure.

It is the responsibility of the Leadership Team to promote an ethos and to make arrangements for the curriculum which help with the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves, and comply, with this policy and procedure in accordance with relevant professional standards.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

To promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each member of the Academy community, the Academy will:

a) Develop the school environment by:

- making the Academy a place of welcome for all visitors;
- maintaining and improving grounds;
- creating areas and times of silence;
- celebrating achievement through the display of work; and
- ensuring that play and leisure areas encourage and promote co-operative behaviour.

b) Enable the whole curriculum to be a vehicle for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- presenting positive images of regions, countries, faiths and cultures from around the world and challenging stereotypes;
- ensuring that subjects like RE, English and Art include space for personal reflection;
- taking opportunities to reflect on events in all areas of the curriculum, especially those which may involve a sense of awe, wonder or mystery;
- encouraging students to see a pattern and purpose in life;
- promoting aesthetic awareness;
- being sensitive to the scope of human achievement;
- providing opportunities for students to engage in activities of discovery and exploration;
- ensuring achievement and effort are celebrated and self-esteem enhanced;
- assisting students in the pursuit of truth and excellence;
- providing opportunities to search for meaning and coherence in experience;
- exploring the connection between personal philosophy and behaviour; and
- continuing to plan for and provide in-Academy events and educational visits which afford students the opportunity to understand both their own and other cultures and societies.

c) Build structures that encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- giving students opportunity to exercise responsibility and initiative;
- implementing discipline strategies that emphasise and reward positive behaviour;
- ensuring that sanctions allow students to take responsibility for their behaviour, while balancing this with the need for forgiveness and reconciliation, rather than judgement and reprimand;
- encouraging teamwork and co-operation and emphasising that achievement and success should not be attained at the expense of others;
- encouraging competition based on mutual respect;
- instituting procedures that emphasise the equality and dignity of each person and combating intolerant attitudes manifested in bullying, racism, sexism and violence; and
- enabling students to recognise the inter-dependence of human beings through work for charity and in community programmes.

d) Establish and maintain an ethos to encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- setting an example of justice, fairness, truth and respect in dealings between members of staff and between staff and students;
- avoiding the use of language and other modes of expression which tend to denigrate others;
- encouraging tolerance and a willingness to listen to and value difference of opinion;
- valuing courtesy and consideration for others;

- making available facilities for individual support, guidance and counselling where needed;
- involving students in developing the Code of Conduct; and
- developing appropriate courses and curriculum in PSHE and RSE

SMSC in the Curriculum

All curriculum areas have a contribution to the student's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum.