



SMSC Policy

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Policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development (SMSC)

Introduction

Bents Green School regards the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspect of education as a core entitlement for all students. It is provided in all formal and informal settings and permeates every aspect of the school's work, although there are many ways of interpreting the terms Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. Through the school's SMSC curriculum British values are promoted. The development of SMSC is an inherent part of the way we work. It is embedded in the culture of the school, modelled by staff and pupils throughout the day, taught overtly in Personal Social Development (PSD) and is recognised and celebrated alongside academic achievement.

Defining spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

Spiritual development

The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:

- Ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in 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.

'Spiritual development is an important element of a child's education and fundamental to other areas of learning. Without curiosity, without the inclination to question, and without the exercise of imagination, insight and intuition, young people would lack the motivation to learn, and their intellectual development would be impaired. Deprived of self-understanding and potentially the ability to understand others, they may experience difficulty in co-existing with neighbours and colleagues to the detriment of their social development. Were they not able to be moved by feelings of awe and wonder at the beauty of the world we live in, or the power of artists, musicians and writers to manipulate space, sound and language, they would live in an inner spiritual and cultural desert'.

(*'Spiritual and Moral Development'* - NCC).

The NCC paper describes spiritual development as: A sense of awe, wonder and mystery – being inspired by the natural world, mystery or human achievement; although this is not easy to teach, it is possible to offer pupils the opportunities to try to develop this sense for themselves. Outdoor

learning is a very important aspect of the whole curriculum; this aspect is led by specialist teachers in Forest School and Physical Education. All pupils have opportunities to learn about the wonder and importance of nature and the environment. Bents Green is an FSA (Forest School Association) recognised Forest School Provider. This means we provide a programme of Forest School in line with the six key principles of Forest School;

1. FS is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than a one-off or infrequent visits; the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session.
2. FS takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3. FS uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for being, development and learning.
4. FS aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
5. FS offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
6. FS is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

The Forest School curriculum supports participants to develop responsibility for themselves and others. It encourages early risk management strategies that will ensure that everyone considers the impact of their actions on themselves, on others and on the environment. Wherever possible we incorporate global aspects of learning into the sessions which add other dimensions and perspectives to pupils' experience.

As a school we participate in the RHS award scheme and are well on our way towards the RHS School Gardening Awards Level 4. The school garden at the Ringinglow site is used as a base for on-site Forest School sessions making it an integral part of their learning experience.

The Forest School Ethos:

"TO ENCOURAGE AND INSPIRE INDIVIDUALS OF ANY AGE THROUGH POSITIVE EXPERIENCES AND PARTICIPATION IN ENGAGING AND MOTIVATING ACHIEVABLE ACTIVITIES IN A WOODLAND ENVIRONMENT, HELPING TO DEVELOP PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS."

(Forest Schools Association)

Defining characteristics of Forest School include the following;

- Outdoor setting, ideally local woodland.
- It is based on regular visits with sessions run over a period of time. (at least 6 weeks)



- It is learner-led following a child-initiated approach.
- It provides a “safe enough” environment, facilitating participants being able to take small successful steps and take risks in a controlled environment
- It provides a multi-sensory and inclusive ethos.
- It is facilitated by a trained level 3 Forest School leader.

Forest School supports the core aims of Bents Green School in promoting highly personalised learning opportunities which support individuals to realise their potential. Forest School sessions take place on site in the school grounds. Whilst the base for activities is the woodland on the south of the site, full use of all the outdoor spaces is made. <See Forest Schools Handbook>

Self-knowledge – an awareness of oneself in terms of thoughts, feelings, emotions, responsibilities and experiences; a growing understanding and acceptance of individual identity; an ability to build up relationships with others. This is an essential part of our work with children. Some pupils have to be helped to understand who they are and how they are separate from other people. Pupils are helped to understand what they are good at, through praise, reward and celebration. For many pupils, the PSD curriculum focuses on aspects of self-knowledge - from the very practical aspects of ‘who am I?’ (which often involving mirror work) to more fundamental questions of “what am I good at?”, “what do I still need help with?” and “how can I move forward?”

Relationships – recognising and valuing the worth of each individual; developing a sense of community; the ability to build up relationships with others. A key area of our work at Bents Green School is the development of positive relationships. Although most pupils can make relationships with the adults who reach out to them and empathise with them, often find it harder to develop friendships with peers. Therefore, in order to help the pupils to develop the confidence and skills needed to form positive relationships, members of staff model the key behaviours throughout school life. These skills are also taught in PSD, supported in class via Circle Time and social skills activities and promoted on the playground. Through these supported activities, the pupils are given strategies through which they can develop relationships with their peers.

Creativity – expressing innermost thoughts and feelings through, for example, art, music, literature and crafts; exercising the imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight. Bents Green is a creative school. Music is a very important aspect of our whole curriculum. The school benefits from a music specialist, music teacher who is able to help some children individually to express their inner



feelings through music. Art and dance are used with pupils to provide a means of developing their creativity as a means of self-expression, encourage students to explore their ideas and movements, developing workshops and performances which combine dance, video and art. The school also engages with several organisations who provide interactive performances for the pupils as well as the many opportunities they have in school to demonstrate and take part in performing arts. Music is used as a tool for the seven C's at Bents Green and as a method of communication for all pupils.

Feelings and emotions – *‘the sense of being moved by beauty or kindness; hurt by injustice or aggression; a growing awareness of when to it is important to control emotions and feelings, and how to learn to use such feelings as a source of growth.’*

Our school has specialist resources to help pupils understand their feelings and emotions. Pupils are helped to express feelings and emotions through a range of activities such as role play. The use of Intensive Interaction, a nurturing approach as well as music and rebound therapy support individual pupils express, understand and manage their emotions. Teachers and assistants receive specialist training in supporting pupils who have complex emotional needs. We recognise that pupils learn better when they have an emotional attachment to the person imparting information or knowledge. Pupils are supported through positive, caring relationships based on comfort and forgiveness.

Moral development

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 being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.

At Bents Green we regard moral development as the building of a framework of values which regulates personal behaviour. It is also about the development of pupils' understanding of society's shared and agreed values. 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.

At Bents Green we seek to ensure that pupils:

- have an ability to distinguish right from wrong, based on a knowledge of the moral codes of their own and other cultures;
- a confidence to act consistently in accordance with their own principles;
- an ability to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions;
- a willingness to express their views on ethical issues and personal values;
- an ability to make responsible and reasoned judgements on moral dilemmas;
- a commitment to personal values in areas which are considered right by some and wrong by others;
- a considerate style of life;
- a respect for others' needs, interests and feelings, as well as their own;
- a desire to explore their own and others' views;
- an understanding of the need to review and reassess their values, codes and principles in the light of experience.

We promote moral values through: providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school; promote a range of measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria; gives the pupils a variety of opportunities, across the curriculum, to explore.

At Bents Green we regard social development as focusing on supporting young people to work effectively with each other 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. It is about functioning effectively in a multiracial, multicultural society. It involves growth in knowledge and understanding of society in all its aspects. We encourage pupils to identify with key values and principles on which our school is based; foster a sense of community, with common, inclusive values which ensure that everyone, irrespective of ethnic origin, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation and religion can flourish; encourage pupils to work co-operatively; encourage pupils to recognise and respect social differences and similarities; provide positive corporate experiences – for example, through assemblies, team activities, residential experiences, school productions. We help pupils develop personal qualities which are valued in a civilised society - for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, self-respect, interdependence, independence; help pupils to challenge, when necessary and in appropriate ways, the values of a group or wider community; help pupils resolve tensions between their own aspirations and those of the group or wider society; provide a conceptual and linguistic framework within which to

understand and debate social issues provide opportunities for engaging in the democratic process and participating in community life; provide opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility; provide positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community. All pupils have a status in the school. Many pupils have jobs to do in their own classrooms and this extends into the work of the school as they become older and more able to take on more responsibilities. Pupils are encouraged to show respect to staff and peers, through overt teaching and through good modelling. Team work is emphasised in PE lessons and children are encouraged to work together to achieve goals.

Physical Education (PE) and Adventure Physical Education (APE) in the Bents Green Curriculum

PE is taught across all year groups as part of the statutory curriculum, but has a slightly different approach at Phase 3 (PE) and Phase 4 (APE). This is done to suit the needs of the students at specific periods within their education.

The overall aims of the PE curriculum at Phase 3 and Phase 4 are:

- To provide and encourage participation in a wide variety of sports including team, individual and outdoor adventurous activities
- To provide engaging experiences that will encourage lifelong participation
- To develop health related components essential for our everyday lives
- To support those wishing to pursue sport at a higher level
- To develop links with community clubs to allow continued participation externally
- To provide a knowledge and understanding of how to lead a healthy and active lifestyle
- To embed morals and values such as fairness and respect
- To develop problem solving skills
- To develop self esteem, confidence, resilience and promote growth mindset
- To provide extra curricular opportunities for residential living, away from parents or carers
- To make lessons enjoyable and fun
- To provide a happy, caring and challenging learning environment considering the safeguarding of both students and staff

PE at Phase 3 (Years 7 and 8)

The National Curriculum aims are targeted in a more traditional approach, using invasion games, net/wall games, dance, gymnastics, athletics, health and fitness, outdoor adventurous activities to develop characteristics within the schools 7 C's focus. There is also a greater focus on developing

gross and fine motor skills through an expansive range of sports. The format of lessons include 3 separate 45 minute lessons each week, that are based predominantly on-site.

PE at Phase 4 (Years 9,10)

Adventure PE uses adventure activities to target the national curriculum aims. This has less focus on sport specific skills and more emphasis on developing soft skills that will benefit the transition into college and beyond. Activities include; canoe / kayak, hillwalking, rock climbing, abseiling, caving, weaselling, mountain biking and archery. All these activities are centred around the 7 C's and SCERTs.

The format of lessons include 3/4 lessons grouped together as a morning or afternoon that is based predominantly off-site. This shift in focus attempts to give greater attention to the SCERTS model / 7 C's and improve drop-off levels in motivation and engagement for PE within Phase 4.

PE at Phase 4 (Years 11)

At Year 11 students follow a sports enrichment option for the whole day. This involves selecting one or more of the following options:

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award – completing the four elements of DofE including Physical, Skill, Volunteering and Expedition.

Sport Recreation – travelling to local sports facilities to participate in a range of activities i.e. visiting a gym.

Outdoor Adventure – activities as described above.

The format of lessons include 1 whole day, allowing time for physical activity, but also to carry out the planning, preparation and journeying required to visit a venue for sport, exercise and health.

Inclusion Statement

In all aspects of PE students are encouraged to take an active role in all lessons. Lessons will be adapted / modified to suit the ability of all students, allowing them to take part in some capacity, in all activities available.

Extra Curricular Opportunities

PE aims to offer a variety of after-school activities, both competitive and non-competitive, to develop school-club links that students can access outside of school.

PE Residential

- Year 7 / 8 – 1 night school site camping experience
- Year 9 – 1 night off-site camping experience
- Year 10 / 11 - 5 night residential sailing experience

Cultural development

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 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 understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity, and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

At Bents Green we promote cultural development through providing practical opportunities for pupils to explore experiences, values and traditions of diverse cultures. We seek to extend pupils' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language; recognise and nurture particular gifts and talents; provide opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encourage pupils to reflect on their significance; develop partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend pupils' cultural awareness, for example, theatre, museum, concert and gallery visits, resident artists, residential visits. We reinforce the school's cultural values through displays, posters, exhibitions, etc. We aim to support pupils to become culturally aware by providing opportunities for each to have an openness to new ideas and a willingness to modify cultural values in the light of experience; an ability to use language and understand images/icons – for example, in music, art, literature which have significance and meaning in a culture; a willingness to participate in, and respond to, artistic and cultural enterprises; a sense of personal enrichment through encounter with cultural media and traditions

from a range of cultures; a regard for the heights of human achievement in all cultures and societies; an appreciation of the diversity and interdependence of cultures. It is more relevant for pupils with complex learning difficulties to approach the idea of 'culture' as "the artistic and social pursuits, expressions and tastes valued by a society" rather than as "the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which constitute the shared bases of social action" (dictionary definitions).

There are many opportunities for pupils to experience music, dance, art, ceramics and drama. Ringinglow site has a specialist music room and engages a range of creative practitioners.

Promoting British Values at Bents Green School

The DfE have identified a need *"to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to 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."*

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, and these values have been reiterated by the Prime Minister in 2014. At Bents Green School these values are demonstrated throughout the school. Much of our work on values is achieved as part of our Social, Moral and Spiritual and Cultural curriculum (SMSC) as well as our approach to teaching about "good choices".

Democracy: We listen to pupils' and parent's/carer's voice. We are clear in showing that we want the young people to contribute and co-operate and consider the views and needs of others. Our Student Council ensures that they have a real say in their school. The school council meets weekly and makes recommendations about changes for the future. Students are also consulted with regarding proposed changes and they take an active role in staff recruitment.

The Rule of Law: We consistently reinforce our high expectations of young people. Whenever appropriate learners are taught the value and reasons behind our expectations (rules), that they are there to protect us, that everyone has responsibility and that there may be consequences when rules are disregarded.

Individual Liberty: Within school, everyone is actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we try and help our young people learn about what makes a good choice. Young people are encouraged to express their views and we respond to their preferences and interests throughout our teaching.



Mutual Respect: All staff demonstrate respect to everyone they come into contact with. They consistently promote the behaviours and attitudes that are the foundation of positive relationships. The strong school ethos encourages everyone to consider and support each other and to celebrate the worth and individuality of every member of the school community.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs: A key theme in our teaching is understanding the world around us, and this includes providing experiences relating to different faiths, beliefs and cultures.

This school will not tolerate any extremist political or religious views expressed openly by staff or governors either in school to students or other staff members or in more public forums such as social media. Staff members may be subject to disciplinary action if necessary. This school does not tolerate extremist views expressed by any visitors to the school, including parents. If a staff member hears such views then they must refuse further dialogue with that person and inform a member of the SLT immediately.

How we protect pupils from extremist views, including religious and political extremism

Religious Education at Bents Green School covers the main world religions and promotes tolerance and understanding of world views.

- have secure values and beliefs, and have principles to distinguish right from wrong.
- challenge injustice, are committed to human rights and strive to live peaceably with others.
- reflect on the impact of religion and belief in the world

Pupils are given opportunities to visit different places of worship. Educational journeys include opportunities to experience and learn about different cultures.

Different cultures are explored and celebrated as across the Bents Green Curriculum

Any of our pupils may come into contact with extremist views, literature or propaganda at any time, including when on school trips. Staff leading or accompanying trips must be vigilant to this possibility. It is our duty to support pupils who may be distressed or frightened by what they read or see. We must always help pupils to have a balanced view as well as give them coping strategies in dealing with what may be external pressures

