



# Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy

## AIMS

- To educate the pupil in the fullest sense so that she begins to realise her academic and personal potential.
- To create a happy and caring environment within which pupils can develop a sense of their personal worth.
- To develop a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and a respect for others to enable each pupil to make a worthwhile contribution to the community.
- To develop initiative, confidence, independence and self-discipline in order to meet the challenges of life.

## OBJECTIVES

- The acquisition of knowledge and skills in terms of literacy, numeracy, aesthetic sensibility and physical well-being.
- The fostering of levels of expectation which are realistic yet demanding.
- The development of social, moral and religious values through the curriculum.
- The establishment of positive relationships to develop self-discipline and to encourage self-expression and self-realisation.

## Introduction

The school follows the guidance and advice given in the following three publications:

“Improving the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development of Pupils; Departmental advice for Independent Schools and Academies/Free Schools Version 2 February 2013 (DfE)”

“Guidance on Improving the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development of Pupils; Non-statutory Guidance for Independent Schools (DfE)”

“Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools” Departmental advice for maintained schools DfE November 2014

The standard for the SMSC development of pupils in the ISI Regulations now includes subparagraphs which are intended to ensure that schools:

- encourage pupils to respect specified fundamental British values;
- do not promote extremist views, or partisan political views, through their curriculum and/or teaching
- offer pupils a balanced presentation of views when political issues are brought to their attention

In accordance with the guidance given by the Department of Education the School understands SMSC as:

**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 may call it the development of a pupil's 'soul'; others as the development of 'personality' and '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 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 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 interpersonal skills necessary for successful relationships.

**Cultural Development:** helping pupils to develop an understanding of their own culture and other cultures in their city, 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.

The School's aims and objectives positively assert that MTGS offers an education 'in the fullest sense' and that this means the development of 'academic and personal potential'. The fullest sense, in terms of the 1992 Schools Act, is one which includes the "spiritual, moral, social and cultural development" of each pupil. In addition, the *Every Child Matters* agenda (DfES 2004) is reflected naturally in the School's aims (for example, 'Enjoy and achieve'). The objectives make it clear that the development is throughout the whole curriculum, and coupled to this is the establishment of positive personal relationships. This concerns adults and young people alike aiming to set, and being entitled to expect from others, good, caring standards of behaviour, marked by respect, responsibility, openness and honesty. We emphasise self-discipline for the development of positive attitudes to oneself and others, resulting in self-induced responsible behaviour.

By fostering realistic, but demanding levels of expectation, we encourage and challenge the very able to develop to their fullest degree, and support and enable our lower achieving and average pupils to value themselves and even surprise themselves through what they are able to achieve.

It is the task of the School to ensure that an adequate foundation of experience and knowledge, with opportunities for discussion, reflection and evaluation, is provided, so that pupils can be given maximum scope to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions.

**Merchant Taylors' Girls' School** is a non-denominational Christian school. We work in partnership with parents to provide a sound basis for the development of all pupils, in all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments. It is recognized that these will develop at different rates and that each pupil will begin from a different base point.

It is acknowledged that the school will not be the only means whereby any pupil is influenced spiritually, morally, socially or culturally, and indeed, the school should also reflect other values and customs held within a nation's culture, and to those of other significant cultures, including those represented in the school (albeit a minority of pupils from other cultures).

In an attempt to achieve its aims, the school does have a number of formal structures which are intended to contribute to the general process of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is not intended that these structures obviously and clearly deliver moral, spiritual, social, or cultural development, but that collectively they underpin the more important aspects of the general social relationships which exist within a school. They also provide some of the contexts within which creative personal interaction and development may take place.

1. **The Curriculum:** All subjects and all teachers can and do contribute to personal development simply by the way staff interact with pupils during lessons. Certain subjects by their subject matter, have a particular contribution to make, although all subject departments have a SMSC policy document in their handbooks and incorporate aims and planning in their schemes of work.
2. **Displays and publications:** The School reinforces its ethos through imagery in displays, posters and departmental notice boards as well as items on the website and in the newsletters, celebrating pupils' work and achievements in and out of School in academic and extra-curricular activities. [ECM - 'Enjoy and Achieve']
3. **Assemblies (see the Assembly Policy Document):** Assemblies, by what they applaud, celebrate, encourage and disallow, make a highly significant contribution to the articulation and demonstration of the values which the school wishes to promote and develop. In line with the School's foundation, assemblies are of a broadly Christian character, which provide the opportunity for worship and reflection as well as commentary on personal development. On certain occasions pupils from other faiths are invited to share their faith perspectives, and contributions to the wider community are sought and celebrated through charities and guest speakers. At MTGS, once each academic year, every form will be responsible for preparing and leading a full school assembly.
4. **The Tutorial System:** At MTGS, each girl is a member of a Form or Tutor Group whose tutor is responsible for their academic, social and personal welfare. As part of their role, tutors in Years 7, 8 & 9 conduct two tutor periods a week, one of which as well as dealing with routine administration, will both explicitly and implicitly, deal with the promotion of personal values. In Years 10 & 11, PSHEE is delivered in a timetabled lesson each week. Pupils are introduced to topics including Careers guidance; Current Affairs; Business matters and Health related issues by specialist teachers. Depending upon the Year Group pupils will make presentations; participate in discussions on current affairs (See PSHEE Handbook). [ECM - 'Make a positive contribution']

At MTPS including EYFS, pupils' personal welfare is supported by a form teacher (Key worker in EYFS) who also takes overall responsibility for the academic and social development of pupils in their class. However, all staff recognise the importance of supporting and responding to the SMSC needs of all children in school, irrespective of whose class pupils are in.

5. **Mentoring:** All pupils who need extra support, whether academic or pastoral, are allocated a staff mentor for the year. Meetings can be weekly or less often, but are intended to help the pupil develop through a period of difficulty. We also encourage peer mentoring through our sixth form Listening Service.
6. **Year Activities:** In each Year Group, specific activities take place which are explicitly designed to further personal development. In Y7-9, this includes a Merit, Honours and Order Mark system (Honours system used in Y6) and charity events such as Juliet Day. In Y 10 & 11 there are planned sessions such as relaxation, self-development; whilst in the Sixth Form it includes opportunities for Community Service and business expertise. [ECM - 'Make a positive contribution']

At MTPS, various charity days are organized throughout the year.

7. **Extra-Curricular Activities:** There are numerous and diverse extra-curricular activities which make a major contribution to personal development, especially in sport, music and drama. (See Extra-Curricular Documentation N15). A wide variety of overseas trips and tours, visits to the theatre and art galleries, the creation of the in-house magazine CALLIOPE, concerts from visiting musicians, a thriving CCF and Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, the gardening club and the extremely popular Eco Committee, to name but a few, all contribute to the social and cultural development of pupils. The schools are proud to hold the Green Flag award and this has been gained through the very obvious involvement of the pupils of the school.
8. **Charitable Events:** Throughout the year, all members of the School community are encouraged to initiate, participate and contribute to events (see 5 year vision document for success criteria, see community links). Each form is encouraged to support a chosen charity throughout the year. The school has developed a link with a primary and secondary school in Sierra Leone through its involvement in the local Waterloo Partnership.[ECM - 'Make a positive contribution']
9. **Responsibility and Leadership:** The system of Head Girls, Heads of House; Committees, Form Captains and the School Council provide both formal and informal opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership, service and responsibility.
10. **Specialist Staff:** In addition to all teaching staff, there are a number of specialist staff: the School Nurse, the SEND coordinator, the Gifted and Talented coordinator, the Pastoral Counsellor and the Head of Careers, who have a particular role to play in working closely with individuals to assist them to prepare in diverse ways for the outside world. [ECM - Be Healthy, Stay safe]
11. **Special Services:** During the school year there are occasions, such as The Carol Service; The Easter Assembly and the Thanksgiving Service, which are celebrated in and through Christian acts of worship. These serve both to remind the school of its heritage and enable it to celebrate what it is.

## **12. The School Ethos and Rules**

There is so much more to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development than just conforming to a set of rules. It is important, however, to have a well regulated and disciplined environment for any educational achievement. The school has policy documents on the school codes of behaviour that are based on the fundamental tenet of mutual respect, and these together with the general ethos of the school (implicitly) are expressions of the values that MTGS seeks to encourage. They are considered to be a vital ingredient in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the pupils.

### **Evaluation:**

SMSC development is an on-going process. Formal discussion and evaluation, involving all staff, will take place regularly. All departments have conducted a review of their SMSC provision, including fundamental British values, (May 2015). [See appendix for departmental summaries]. At the Senior School, further to the findings of the RSA Action and Research Centre report on SMSC, the academic year 2015 – 2016 will be designated as a “Year of Reflection”.

The Headmistress has responsibility for overseeing the planning, the provision and the monitoring and evaluation of SMSC development. The First Deputy Headmistress, Head and Deputy Head at MTPS will co-ordinate the contribution of each subject department and Assemblies, whilst the Heads of PSHEE will ensure the curriculum of PSHEE is carried out effectively and will keep up-to-date with national developments, whilst advising and supporting staff.

Records of monitoring/evaluation are kept from SMT, HODs, staff and departmental meetings, as well as evaluations from PSHEE lessons, assembly records and participation in extra-curricular activities.

### **Equal Opportunities:**

Our school is committed to equality of opportunity which will allow all adults and children to realise their potential, socially, academically physically and spiritually, and to make the maximum contribution to the school and wider community, both now and in the future. Equality of opportunity should be experienced and expected by everyone within all areas of school life. Throughout the PSHEE provision in the school, students are encouraged to have respect for other people, paying particular regard to: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation (as set out in the Equality Act 2010).

### **Review:**

The School will review this policy, formally, four years from the date of its adoption. Informal review may be necessary in the interim and should take place as and when required.

**Updated July 2016**

J.Tyndall

