



Wychwood School
OXFORD

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL POLICY

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Rationale

At Wychwood, Oxford, we believe that development of the whole person is important and that this area of the curriculum helps to promote pupils' well being. We recognise that the personal development of young people, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that gives young people opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures and races.

All curriculum areas make their own contribution to the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum, as appropriate.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural values and sensitivities are at the heart of our community life and relationships, and all people who enter or are associated with our school, whether pupil, staff, governor, parent or visitor, are valued as individuals in their own right. We also believe that the development of these values and sensitivities happens in partnership between home and school.

Definitions

Spiritual development – we understand this to be the development of an awareness that there is more to life than meets the eye, more than the material. This may involve the exploration of and response to purpose, meaning, identity, values and beliefs, including religious beliefs and the nature of God. Spiritual development may also involve expression of the highest ideals of humanity, ideology, respect, the appreciation of culture, beauty, and the pursuit of excellence.

Moral development – we understand this to be the development of principles to distinguish right from wrong and respect for rules and the law.

Social development – we understand this to be the developing understanding of how to be responsible and caring citizens. This includes taking responsibility for one's own actions and behaviour, taking an active interest in other people, contributing to community life – both in the local and global contexts – and developing an awareness of public institutions and services in this country, in line with the Gov.UK guidance on Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (Published 27 November 2014).

Cultural development – we understand this to be the development of knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the pupils' own and different beliefs and cultures, and how these influence individuals and societies. This involves respect for and tolerance of the traditions of others.

Aims

Spiritual development

In order to develop the spiritual aspects of a pupil's life, we aim to provide opportunities for pupils to:

1. Actively promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
2. Enjoy exploring diversity and difference
3. Develop personal beliefs and values
4. Listen, reflect and puzzle
5. Consider their own feelings, likes and dislikes
6. Begin to show insights into deep questions about life, change and death
7. Engage in activities which involve questioning, valuing, creating, envisioning, empathising, imagining
8. Develop an understanding of their relationships with those near and far.

Moral development

In order to develop the moral aspects of a pupil's life, we aim to provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Actively promote the rule of law and individual history
- Develop a sense of right and wrong and respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- Examine motives for action
- Be aware of the needs of others
- Formulate and review their own values
- Reflect on moral principles and "codes"
- Understand the principles of equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities
- Live and work in an atmosphere in which justice, fairness, integrity and respect can flourish through high expectations and example.

Social development

In order to develop the social aspects of a pupil's life, we aim to provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Develop self knowledge, self esteem and self confidence
- Understand the importance of relationships, why they sometimes go wrong and how to put them right
- Explore the relationship between beliefs, values and actions and the acceptance of rules of behaviour
- Understand the existence of the community of people whose sexual or gender identities can create shared political and social concerns: LGBTQ+
- Recognise the qualities in and the value of people of all ages.
- Show concern for those with special needs or disability
- Work in a range of groups in a co-operative way
- Come to terms with their own experiences
- Explore aspects of citizenship
- Recognise the need to live harmoniously in a multi cultural and multi racial society
- Communicate with others with increased confidence
- Engage in activities which benefit others
- Consider issues from others' points of view, listening with respect
- Use language in a range of groups and contexts
- Write for a range of purposes and audiences
- Reflect on personal and social issues
- Take responsibility and show initiative
- Reflect on political issues (where appropriately brought to the attention of pupils) in a balanced way while, in attendance at school
- Take part in extracurricular activity provided or organised by on behalf of the School
- Take part in the promotion of the School, throughout the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere.

Cultural development

In order to develop the cultural aspects of a pupil's life, we aim to provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Actively promote the fundamental British value of democracy – encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process including respect for the basis on which law is made and applied in England
- Actively promote the fundamental British value of the rule of law as seen in the Rules and Fire Assemblies at the beginning of each term
- Actively promote the fundamental British value of the right to individual liberty within the rule of law and the school rules
- Acquire a broad and general knowledge of and respect for institutions and the law in England
- Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of respect for their own and other beliefs and cultures.

- Engage in discussions on different cultural practices and lifestyles
- Ask questions from within the safety of their own cultural traditions and practices
- Learn open-mindedness, sensitivity and respect
- Begin to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping
- Understand culture as the expression of, and appreciation of, the best of human endeavour through its artistic and literary expression.

Practice

Listed below are some of the ways we believe we implement our aims.

- Teaching and Learning Principles (all strands)
- Specific contributions in Departmental handbooks (all strands)
- Relationships as demonstrated within the School (especially social, moral and cultural strands)
- Council (probably all strands at some time or other)
- Specific Policies and their implementation; for instance: Curriculum, Equal Opportunities, SEND etc.
- Understanding all school rules and the “major” system and the reasoning behind them (especially social and moral strands)
- Pupils taking responsibility; for example, collecting the register file, clearing up after supper, Housemothers, House sisters, Heads of Bedroom, Citizens, Councillors, Heads of Boarding Houses (especially social and moral strands)
- Fundraising for a variety of charitable causes (especially social strand)
- Assemblies (all strands)
- Thought for the Week (all strands)
- School displays in the Library, departmental and shared areas (all strands)
- Procedures established within the School for dealing with difficulties; for example, bullying (especially social and moral strands)
- Procedures and ethos within the School for dealing with girls with special educational needs and disabilities and for whom English is an additional language (especially social and moral strands)
- Teaching styles and classroom organisation, for instance, using a variety of groups (especially social strand)
- All areas of curriculum teaching contribute to SMSC, although some areas have more explicit content towards specific strands (all strands)
- Literature and discussion of themes and issues raised (all strands)
- Creative Art and Performing Arts (all strands)
- Sciences (especially social and moral strands)
- Encountering cultural and social differences through trips and fieldwork including residential languages trips, Geography and Biology field trips, History of Art to Paris and Rome, Art trip to Cornwall 2022, Iceland 2022 (Geography) and Italy 2023 (Maths) trips and annual Key Stage 3, 4 and Study bonding trips (especially cultural and social strands)
- Spanish and French Plays

- Teamwork; for example in PE and inter-House activities, the Wychwood Sixth team building day, and the year group weekend teambuilding experiences (social strand)
- Study Enrichment programme, including pre Covid visits to the Houses of Parliament, the Churchill War Rooms, Royal Courts of Justice, Buckingham Palace, Tate Modern, The RA Summer Exhibition etc. (all strands)
- Inters “The Real Game” delivered through Careers lessons and Remove ‘Make it Real’ Careers day (especially social, moral and cultural strands)
- UTs, Shell and Study ‘futures form time forums’ as part of ongoing careers education
- Work Experience options after Shell examinations and Community Service (especially social, moral and cultural strands)
- Wychwood Enterprise (especially social, moral and cultural strands)
- Duke of Edinburgh Award (social and cultural strands)
- Model United Nations preparation and conferences (social, moral and cultural strands)
- Life in the boarding community, including golden ticket nights, special themed evenings for boarders and weekend outings including opportunities to attend Church services (all strands)
- Boarding weekend and evening activities (all strands)
- Whole school awareness of, sensitivity to and respect for specific religious seasons and events through staff or pupil led Assembly, and sometimes with visiting representatives of specific religious beliefs and philosophies (especially moral, spiritual and cultural strands)
- The opportunity for attending Confirmation classes at the local Church (spiritual, moral and social strands)
- Girls with other denominations of the Christian faith have the opportunity to attend churches of their denomination
- Girls of other faith have their views respected and supported e.g. a prayer room would be provided for anyone who chooses to use it
- Girls with strong non-religious belief are respected although we expect them to come to assemblies
- Acknowledgement of our Christian heritage and the Christian foundation of the school through weekly hymn singing and the Christmas Carol service.
- Visits to places of worship: Remove to the Hindu Temple, Inters to Coventry Cathedral and LTs to the Oxford Synagogue.

See also the page in the Boarding Handbook on “Religious, Language and Cultural Needs of boarders”, Sex and Relationships Education Policy, Curriculum Policy and departmental handbooks.