



FIRST STEPS TOGETHER
SKILLS FOR LIFE

SMSC POLICY

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1. Introduction

First Steps Together 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 PSHE 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/explored overtly in assemblies, PHSE (RSE) lessons and RE lessons, and throughout the rest of the curriculum.

Evidence of the work we undertake in SMSC is collated termly and presented within Proprietary Board meetings.

2. Defining spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

2.1 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 specifically honed, within RE lessons which extend to all year groups. We also celebrate various spiritual and religious festivities throughout the year; these contribute to assemblies and whole school thematic activities.

A key area of our work is the development of positive relationships. Although most pupils can make some level of relationships with the adults who reach out to them and empathise

with them, some 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. 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.

2.2 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 First Steps Together 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.

We seek to ensure that pupils have an ability to distinguish right from wrong, based on a knowledge of the moral codes of theirs 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 by providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through our Positive Behaviour Support Policy and all aspects of school life.

2.3 Social development

The social development of pupils is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- acceptance of and engagement with 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 pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

At First Steps Together 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, disability and religion can flourish; encourage pupils to work cooperatively; encourage pupils to recognise and respect social differences and similarities; provide positive corporate experiences – for

example, through everyday activities such as assemblies, team activities, social times and residential experiences. 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 and good manners; 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. Teamwork is emphasised across the curriculum where pupils are encouraged to work together to achieve goals.

2.4 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 First Steps Together we promote cultural development through providing practical opportunities and experiences for pupils to explore 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 through enrichment opportunities, 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. 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.

A student council, has initiatives to promote cultural experiences throughout the year. Our eco-committee, and school council meet at least once a week (timetabled period); which contributes significantly to SMSC priorities within the school.

Promoting Fundamental British Values

The DfE Guidance states that all schools have a duty to 'actively promote' the fundamental British values of:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

These values are embedded in the ethos and culture of First Steps Together and are regularly revisited in different ways. For example, British Values are taught explicitly through Personal, Social, Health and Emotional (PSHE& RSE), and Religious Education (RE) but the school also takes opportunities to promote British Values through differing assembly themes.

First Steps Together seeks to promote British Values through planning and delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, ensuring real opportunities for exploring these values are provided.

Actively promoting British Values also means challenging pupils or staff who express opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including extremism or racism. All staff have training on radicalisation and the PREVENT Strategy.

Democracy

Democracy is an integral part of our school. Pupil Voice is highly valued and respect and tolerance for the views and opinions of others is actively promoted. Our Student Council provides opportunities for promoting and understanding democracy. At election time, pupils are provided with opportunities to find out more about the election process and the various parties. There are also topics linked to democracy within PSHE and humanities, which pupils' access and revisit throughout the Key Stages.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws and rules, whether they are those that govern the class, the school or the country, are consistently reinforced. Our school rules are reviewed with pupils contributing to any revisions. Some aspects of the law are explored regularly or frequently within different topics through RSE lessons and E-Safety. Staff work with some individual pupils on specific aspects of the law as linked to their needs and limited understanding of consequences.

Individual Liberty

Pupils are actively encouraged to make positive choices at First Steps Together knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. All pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these safely, for example through E-Safety teaching. Pupils are given the freedom to make choices, e.g. individual coping strategies to support anxiety and frustration, enrichment

activities, qualification pathways. Pupils have opportunities to find out about historical events which have had an impact on the freedom of citizens eg. Remembrance.

Mutual Respect

First Steps Together is a fully inclusive setting where everyone is valued and it is recognised that everyone has a contribution to make. Pupils are encouraged to show respect for themselves and for others and to understand that along with rights come responsibilities. Bullying is not accepted and a separate Anti-Bullying Policy is in place.

Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs

First Steps Together is committed to proactively support pupils and staff from differing faith backgrounds, and difference and diversity are celebrated. All pupils are also provided with opportunities to experience diversity in school, the local community and beyond. Assemblies and discussions about prejudice and tolerance are supported by learning in RE and PSHE (RSE).