



BOLTON
SCHOOL
GIRLS' DIVISION

SMSC POLICY
2021-22

Bolton School Girls' Division Senior School Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

This policy was drawn up with reference to DfE Guidance on the Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSRs),

Introduction

Through its ethos, curriculum, extra-curricular activities and the way in which daily life and interpersonal relationships are conducted, Bolton School Girls' Division promotes principles which are designed to enable pupils to make significant personal development during their time in School. Our pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. We seek:

- to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- to enable them to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law;
- to help them accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
- to provide them with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England;
- to assist them to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions;
- actively to ensure that they value the Fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and
- to encourage in them respect for other people, paying particular regard to protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Ethos

School life is based on mutual respect and an overriding sense of community in which all pupils look out for each other and the older pupils are particularly solicitous of the younger ones. The School seeks to develop in the pupils a strong sense of belonging within the Form, Year, School and Foundation. This sense of belonging continues when the pupils leave the School, thanks to a very large number of alumni dinners and activities and the development of a network of Old Girls who are willing to come back to School and to give of their time and energy. Many former members of School contribute to bursaries, which allow the School to offer access to able pupils of all backgrounds, regardless of family income.

Participation in team activities, residential visits and school productions is encouraged and celebrated in the School Newsletters, Magazines, on the website and at assemblies. The School prayer states that 'much is required of those to whom much is given' and service within the School and the wider Community is especially valued, whilst volunteering is actively promoted among Sixth Form students in particular.

How we define SMSC

We recognise that *Spiritual* development is concerned with the spiritual dimension of human existence and is not confined to religious belief. It is therefore open to all.

Spiritual development enables people

- to reflect on the meaning and purpose of life,
- to develop personal beliefs which may or may not include religious beliefs,
- to recognise that people base their lives upon personal and shared beliefs,
- to look within themselves, at their relationships and at the wide world and to recognise their own worth and the worth of others,
- to exercise intellectual curiosity, imagination, creativity,
- to respond to feelings of awe and wonder,
- to be inspired by nature and human achievement.

Moral development is concerned with the ability to recognise the principles of right and wrong action and to recognise that a concept of duty is required in order to live in a community. (See also The Behaviour Management Policy)

Moral development enables people

- to take a thoughtful view of what is right and wrong,
- to develop personal moral values,
- to develop self-esteem,
- to understand the concept of community and that rights are balanced by responsibilities,
- to regulate their behaviour through principles rather than through reward or punishment,
- to understand that actions have consequences.

Social development is concerned with taking responsibility, showing initiative and developing an understanding of living in a community.

Social development enables people

- to develop social skills and to relate to others successfully,
- to recognise principles of equality and values of inclusion,
- to develop characteristics such as tolerance and respect,
- to develop skills of leadership, responsibility, co-operation, teamwork,
- to gain understanding of the ways in which societies function.

Cultural development is concerned with awareness of one's own cultural traditions and of cultural diversity on a local, national and global scale.

Cultural development enables people

- to recognise, explore and understand their own cultural assumptions and values,
- to be aware of attitudes, values and traditions of other cultures,
- to understand how cultural attitudes and events have shaped their community,
- to appreciate and to celebrate cultural diversity.

Curriculum

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is an integral part of the whole school curriculum and all departments play an important role in that process, with explicit opportunities provided in particular in Religious Education and PSHEE.

The School aims to promote the *spiritual* development of each pupil within lessons by enabling them to reflect on the meaning and purpose of life; to share and discuss their belief systems; to look within themselves, at their relationships and at the wide world and to recognise their

own worth and the worth of others; to exercise intellectual curiosity, imagination, creativity; and to be inspired by nature and human achievement.

As far as their *moral* development is concerned, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, to show initiative and to forge an understanding of what it is to live in a community.

Curricular trips, such as the Year 7 and Year 8 Patterdale residential trips and the Year 9 Bronze Duke of Edinburgh expedition, which all pupils complete, are designed to develop *social* skills and to encourage leadership, cooperation and teamwork. Interaction in the classroom also helps pupils to relate to others successfully, as well as to work together in pairs and groups to achieve success.

Schemes of Work emphasise awareness of the pupils' own *cultural* traditions and of cultural diversity on a local, national and global scale. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of the pupils in their care and take care to reflect the nature of the world we live in by offering balance in the discussion of different opinions, for example concerning religious and political matters in curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Extracurricular Activities

The ideals promoted by the curriculum are reinforced by the pupils' participation in extracurricular activities. A range of popular clubs and societies encourage intelligent discourse on matters of contemporary interest. These include the Model United Nations Society, the Literature and Debating Society, the Politics Society, Green Club and Geography Matters. Teamwork and the mutual support of each other are developed through sport, musical ensembles and choirs, and drama productions. Often, the Sixth Form students take responsibility for the younger pupils' activities, for example in the Psychology Society (run by Sixth Formers for Year 10 and above), and the French Society (Sixth Formers for younger pupils). In Year 12, the opportunity to take part in Young Enterprise develops leadership and entrepreneurial skills. Throughout the School, there is an emphasis on charity, both in terms of giving money and time. In addition to individual and form/year group efforts, which change each year, Year 7 habitually raises money to provide toys for underprivileged children; Year 10 Forms each choose a charity to support in the Christmas Post and the Sixth Form Charity and Community Action Prefects organise a range of fund-raising activities.

Daily Life

The same commitment to the promotion of the pupils' SMSC development exists within the daily organisation of school life and in the way in which relationships are conducted. Teachers and older pupils seek to serve as positive role models to the younger pupils in order to promote the ideals of mutual respect, tolerance and a spirit of harmony.

The assembly calendar is organised so that Tuesday assemblies have a spiritual and/or moral dimension, offering times of silence, stillness and reflection. On Wednesday, assemblies are organised by staff and/or pupils to showcase matters of interest to the pupils and the wider community; they regularly refer to events and experiences across the world. Celebration Assemblies on Fridays allow for the shared celebration of achievements in and out of school. At all ages, the School offers a range of leadership roles and encourages them to take on roles of responsibility (Form Captain, Form School Council Representative, Eco-Rep, ICT ambassador, Charity Rep, Prefect) which allow them to develop their moral and social awareness. Pupil voice is taken seriously: School life and issues are discussed at the pupil-led School Council and in Form time; pupils have a role in the writing of school policies, such as the School Regulations and Dress Code. The process for the election of Form Captain (all years) and Prefects (both Year 11 and 13) allows the pupils to engage in democratic activities.

The Promotion of Fundamental British Values

Given its geographical location and the diversity of its population, the School takes particularly seriously its commitment to encourage respect for British Values:

- **Equality of opportunity:**
By celebrating achievement and encouraging pupils to have the confidence to undertake difficult tasks, to have a wide range of experiences and to question traits (such as a lack of aspiration or unfair discrimination) which prevent them developing into confident adults, we aim to give all pupils an understanding of the importance of equality of opportunity.
We encourage the pupils to regard all faiths, races and cultures with respect. We aim to engender in them an understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law, and an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour. We try to give them some understanding of the problems of identifying and combatting discrimination (based on the protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010).
- **An understanding and appreciation of democracy:**
We aim to give the pupils an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process, for example by holding our own elections for internal positions and by mirroring national events (such as General Elections, etc). This includes an understanding that participation in elections by those opposed to democracy should be allowed by law, but the success of such candidates is undesirable for the well-being of society if it would lead to the end of democracy; and an understanding that bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through the democratic organs of government.
- **Respect for the Civil and Criminal Law of England:**
We aim to encourage an understanding of the law and an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety. We endeavour to enable pupils to develop their own moral sense, and to understand the impact of their actions on other people.
- **An understanding of how public institutions work:**
We include information about how public institutions (such as Parliament, the police force, the Post Office) and services (such as healthcare, welfare services and education) operate in our country in our curricular activities, visits and in assemblies.

In discussing issues, the School is careful not to promote extremist views or partisan political views (see also the Curriculum Policy): we ensure that, when political issues are discussed or arise, pupils are made aware that there are normally countervailing views and a balance is struck between the opinions and beliefs discussed. This may be during lessons, or when extra-curricular activities within the school such as debates take place, or through the use of external speakers. If promotional literature is displayed or if an event is organised at which only one political party or one set of beliefs is propounded, the School ensures that these are not unbalanced and that they do not risk breaches of other SMSC standards (for example, by advertising speakers who are promoting anti-democratic beliefs).

This Policy is reviewed annually and was last updated in July 2021.