



Batchwood School

make every day count

SMSC Policy

Adopted Sept 2012

Reviewed November 2016

Next Review November 2017

Batchwood Policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development (SMSC) Statement of Intent

Batchwood 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, this policy adopts the definitions given by Ofsted in their 2004 document "Promoting and Evaluating Students' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development".

The Policy

This document intends to set out the school position in regard to:

- the way we encourage the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of our students;
- how Batchwood works to ensure this work is covered;
- how it has to develop in the future to do so.

Statutory Requirements

The requirement to provide for – and develop – the spiritual, moral and cultural awareness of all students is enshrined in law:

- The Education Reform Act 1988 - which stated that the curriculum must promote "the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society";
- The Education Act 1992 - which stated that: 'The Chief Inspector for England shall have the general duty of keeping the Secretary of State informed about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students at those schools.';
- The School Inspections Act 1996 re-stated the requirements listed above;
- The Education Act 2002 re-stated the requirements listed above.

Other legislation also reflects the need for schools to focus on students' SMSC development. For example, legislation which promotes race equality, equality for people with special educational needs and disabilities, and which aims to ensure that people are not discriminated against on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion or age are all relevant.

The School Position

There are two important features about Batchwood in regard to students' SMSC development.

1. As a small but highly staffed special school, we are able to take a truly holistic approach to the education of the students. Whilst we strive to ensure that all the students achieve academically, we also aim to develop the whole child and consequently place equal importance on their development as independent human beings. This philosophy is enshrined in our School Aims.

2. The students themselves – **because of their SEMH and for some complex learning difficulties - often have to be overtly taught things that other children pick up naturally.** They generally, judge people by the way they behave in relation to themselves and not from any preconceived notions to do with race gender or religion.

Additionally, the students have the advantage of attending school with other students who also have SEMH or learning difficulties of one sort or another. Consequently, SEMH and learning difficulties is not a strange concept to them but it is a natural fact of life. Students understand that certain people need more help and support and that some students have challenging behaviours which sometimes

impact on their own lives. Although, as an outcome the challenging behaviours exhibited by a few children, some students may be physically hurt by their peers, they are not targeted by a bully.

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 students throughout the day, taught overtly in PSHCE/RS lessons and is recognised and celebrated alongside academic achievement.

Spiritual Development

‘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)

We have adopted this definition because of its relevance to our students. We work hard throughout the curriculum to help children develop a sense of curiosity and a desire to find out and learn. At Batchwood, we have a culture that the students should ask questions and not always wait to be told – and that they should look and learn for themselves in as independent a way as possible.

The NCC paper describes spiritual development as:

A sense of awe, wonder and mystery – being inspired by the natural world, mystery or human achievement;

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;

Relationships – recognising and valuing the worth of each individual; developing a sense of community; the ability to build up relationships with others;

Creativity – expressing innermost thoughts and feelings through, for example, art, music, literature and crafts; exercising the imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight;

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.’

1. A sense of awe and wonder

Although this is not easy to teach, it is possible to offer students the opportunities to try to develop this sense for themselves.

The students join in with a wide range of gardening activities – including attending the Luton Hoo Estate walled garden. Within this, the school grounds are designed to have areas of natural interest with the development of Forest Schools **and a “roundhouse” has recently been completed which is proving to be an excellent addition to our external facilities.** As part of community cohesion, the students regularly visit local parks, forests, woodland areas and are encouraged to see the changes in nature as they occur across the seasons.

As well as the above children visit zoos and local farms to study the animals.

Art displays around the school celebrate and promote achievement in a wide range of subjects and our weekly celebration assembly reinforces this in order to promote awe and wonder.

The development of these concepts is also a key element of the RE curriculum.

2. Self-knowledge

This is an essential part of our work with students. Some students have to be helped to understand who they are and how they are separate from other people. We then encourage students to look at their strength and weaknesses in a variety of ways. Students are helped to understand what they are good at, through praise, reward and celebration. For many students, the PSHCE 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?."

3. Relationships

Another key area of our work at Batchwood School is the Development of positive relationships. Many of our students, particularly those with autism, can find this a very difficult area. Although the students 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 students 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 PSHCE **and supported and discussed in other classes as opportunities and themes arise**. Through these many support activities, the students are given strategies through which they can develop relationships with their peers.

However, it is important to remember that what we perceive to be natural and desirable social interactions may not be the best way for some of our students – for example, some students with autism may prefer not to form relationships. For these students, "One to One" situations with other people can be very stressful. Therefore teachers must know their children well in order to select and promote the most appropriate interventions and learning programmes.

4. Creativity

The vast majority of our students respond positively to making music. We have an excellent range of instruments and music equipment that can be played and used by all students. The school also uses computer based equipment to help children make music and express themselves. The school also benefits from a peripatetic music teacher who is able to help some children individually to express their inner feelings through music. Art is also used with students to provide a means of developing their creativity as a means of self-expression **which is also encouraged and developed throughout the curriculum.**

5. Feelings and emotions

The school has the Phoenix Centre to help students understand their feelings and emotions. Students with limited communication skills need to try and find ways to express feelings and emotions and activities such as role play and mirroring are used to support this.

Moral Development

Moral development is about the building, by students, of a framework of moral values which regulates their personal behaviour. It is also about the development of students' 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.

We consider the moral framework around a student is a partnership and further developed by involving parents and the community as a whole. When on outings and school trips, students are reminded they are representing our school community and always encouraged to be respectful of others and the environment. We continuously communicate with and involve parents about student's behaviour, attitude and commitment and consider this to be a vital part of this particular aspect.

“Promoting and Evaluating Students’ Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development” Ofsted 2004

Students who are morally aware exhibit some or all of the following characteristics:

- 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.

A school that promotes moral values is one that:

- provides a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school;
- promotes a range of measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria;
- gives the students a variety of opportunities, across the curriculum, to explore and develop moral concepts and values – for example, personal rights and responsibilities, truth, justice, equality of opportunity, right and wrong
- develops an open and safe learning environment in which students can express their views and practise moral decision-making
- rewards the expression of moral insights and good behaviour;
- makes an issue of breaches of agreed moral codes where they arise – for example, in the press, on television and the internet as well as in school;
- models, through the quality of relationships and interactions, the principles that they wish to promote – for example, fairness, integrity, respect for people, students’ welfare, respect for minority interests, resolution of conflict, keeping promises and contracts;
- recognises and respects the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the school and wider community
- encourages students to take responsibility for their actions; for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour;
- provides models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts, assemblies and acts of worship
- reinforces the school’s values through images, posters, classroom displays, artwork exhibitions

- monitors the success of what is provided.

Batchwood position

We have an established and embedded ethos that underpins our school aims and is mirrored in the school rules. Having clear and easily understood rules can help form part of the structure that helps support students with SEMH, autism and other difficulties, some of whom relate well to defined boundaries.

In a school where students display challenging behaviour, the control of this behaviour, in order to ensure the safety of all children and staff, is paramount. The school has a positive behaviour policy where good behaviour is modelled, promoted, rewarded and celebrated. Poor behaviour is dealt with in a variety of different ways, as appropriate to each situation, but it is never tolerated or ignored. Where necessary, the teachers draw up relevant “Success Plans”.

In dealing with unacceptable behaviour students are helped to realise that their actions have consequences and that sanctions are a direct result of the students’ behaviour. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, others and the environment. Year 10 and Year 11 students take responsibility for other students through supporting the younger students with reading and pastorally

Relevant PSHCE and RS modules

EYFS and Key Stage 3/4

- Behaviour and feelings
- Working with others
- How our behaviour affects others
- School rules
- Caring for the environment
- Differences and similarities between people
- The family
- Services that help us – medical
- Our Diverse Society
- People from other cultures
- People in other Countries
- Racism
- Skills for friendship
- Bullying
- Myself and Other people
- Recognising Safe Environments and behaviour
- Services that help us - Police & Fire Brigade
- Society and Relationships – Dealing with conflict
- Charities

Social Development

Social development is about 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. It is about functioning effectively in a multiracial, multicultural society. 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.

“Promoting and Evaluating Students’ Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development” Ofsted 2004

Students who are becoming socially aware have the ability to:

- adjust to a range of social contexts by appropriate and sensitive behaviour;
- relate well to other people’s social skills and personal qualities;
- work, successfully, as a member of a group or team;
- challenge, when necessary and in appropriate ways, the values of a group or wider community;
- share views and opinions with others, and work towards consensus;
- resolve conflicts and counter forces which militate against inclusion and unity;
- reflect on their own contribution to society and to the world of work;
- how respect for people, living things, property and the environment;
- benefit from advice offered by those in authority or counselling roles;
- exercise responsibility;
- appreciate the rights and responsibilities of individuals within the wider social setting;
- understand how societies function and are organised in structures such as the family, the school and local and wider communities;
- participate in activities relevant to the community;
- understand the notion of interdependence in an increasingly complex society.

Schools which encourage the students’ social development are those who:

- identify key values and principles on which school and community life 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 students to work co-operatively;
- encourage students to recognise and respect social differences and similarities;
- provide positive corporate experiences – for example, through assemblies, team activities, residential experiences, school productions;
- help students develop personal qualities which are valued in a civilised society - for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, self-respect, interdependence, independence;
- help students to challenge, when necessary and in appropriate ways, the values of a group or wider community;
- help students 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 students to exercise leadership and responsibility;
- provide positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community.

Batchwood position

The benefit for students with learning difficulties in being a part of a small specialist school is that they can truly become members of the school society. Although some students will always be dependent on others, due to the extent of their learning difficulties, the majority of our students can become independent members of our community.

All students have a status in the school. All students 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. Additionally, we take every opportunity for the students to also have a role in the local community.

Students are encouraged to show respect to staff and peers, through overt teaching and through good modelling. Team work is emphasised in P.E. lessons and children are encouraged to work together to achieve goals. The football, netball, cricket, swimming and athletics team – our choir and various dance troupes - are also very important in giving the students opportunities to work in teams – **other examples of this are mountaineering and challenger troop**. At the same time, this helps the school to develop as a community, with students able to rally behind, support, and celebrate the various team achievements.

Teachers are aware that social skills are often a natural deficit for students with autism and they may need to be taught about society in a different way from others. For example, those who are cognitively more able may need to be taught overtly about society's rules, as they will not necessarily pick up an understanding naturally.

Cultural Development

Cultural development is about students' understanding their own culture and other cultures in their town, 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, travel and the internet. It is about understanding that cultures are always changing and coping with change. Promoting students' cultural development is intimately linked with schools' attempts to value cultural diversity and prevent racism.

“Promoting and Evaluating Students’ Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development” Ofsted

Students who are becoming culturally aware are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- an ability to recognise and understand their own cultural assumptions and values;
- an understanding of the influences which have shaped their own cultural heritage;
- an understanding of the dynamic, evolutionary nature of cultures;
- an ability to appreciate cultural diversity and accord dignity and respect to other people's values and beliefs, thereby challenging racism and valuing race equality;
- 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.

Schools which promote cultural development:

- provide opportunities for students to explore their own cultural assumptions and values;
- present authentic accounts of the attitudes, values and traditions of diverse cultures;
- address discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and other criteria and promote racial and other forms of equality;
- extend students' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language;
- recognise and nurture particular gifts and talents;
- provide opportunities for students to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encourage students to reflect on their significance;
- develop partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend students' cultural awareness - for example, theatre, museum, concert and gallery visits, resident artists, foreign exchanges;
- reinforce the school's cultural values through displays, posters, exhibitions, etc.;
- audit the quality and nature of opportunities for students to extend their cultural development across the curriculum;
- monitor the success of what is provided.

Batchwood position

It is more relevant for students with SEMH 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).

Art and music are both on the timetable throughout the school. Drama is a part of the English curriculum and Dance is a club. In experiencing and discussing art and music from different styles and cultures the students will be helped to come to an understanding that there are different traditions in different societies. This work will be supported by work in other subjects such as Art and RE.

There are many opportunities for students to experience music, dance, art and drama:

- Choir
- Visiting musicians
- Visiting theatre companies
- School concerts –Christmas and Easter.
- The school has a wide range of musical instruments, including computer based equipment, to give all students the opportunity to make music.
- Students have the opportunity to take part in art in lessons and their success is celebrated around the school through the many displays on show.
- Students have the opportunity to experience drama and acting in a variety of ways. All students can take part in the school concerts, rehearsing and perfecting their roles.
- Theatre groups visit school to put on plays and some students are also taken to see live theatre shows in professional theatres.