



New Forest Small School

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Member of Staff Responsible	Alison Alp
Regularity of Review	Every 2 Years
This Version Dated	January 2020
Next Review Due	January 2022

1. Rationale

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students in the life of the school

The aims of the school clearly indicate that our task in the education of students is not only about the gaining of knowledge and the acquiring of essential skills, but also about personal development in its fullest sense – which includes appropriate careers guidance. The responsibility for this development is not the province of any particular part of the school's organisation or curriculum; it is a 'whole school' issue requiring a commitment from every member of staff.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and our own Equalities and Cohesion Policy, the school does not discriminate against students on the basis of any protected characteristic (see section 3 below) and works to ensure that SMSC education encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to these protected characteristics.

There are four areas of school life in which opportunities arise for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are the ethos of the school, all subjects of the curriculum, collective worship, and careers guidance.

The ethos of the school reflects the values and attitudes which are promoted, the expectations teachers have of students and which students have of themselves, the quality of relationships, the support and guidance given to students, the opportunities for students to take on responsibility and for personal enrichment and the consistency throughout the life of the school with which such values are pursued. The school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (see below).

Every area of the curriculum can contribute to students' spiritual and moral development and departments have considered how their subject content and teaching and learning methods can make a positive contribution to these aspects of students' personal development. Guidance notes, check lists, evaluation sheets and discussion papers issued to staff provide further information.

Religious Studies teaching will be seen to educate about major world religions and will educate and raise students' awareness, understanding and appreciation.

2. Collective Worship

Objectives

"Collective worship offers students opportunities to explore and share beliefs; consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence; consider the relevance of ideas and beliefs to their own lives; think about the needs of others and develop a sense of community and appreciate the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them. Collective worship also offers an opportunity to re-affirm, interpret and put into practice the values of the school. It provides a time to celebrate the various achievements of members of the community that are held to be of worth". (National Curriculum Council, Spiritual and Moral Development, April 1993)

"Collective worship is a sensitive issue but when approached in a planned and professional way can be a meaningful and worthwhile aspect of school life. It can provide a sense of rhythm in the school day and can develop a sense of unity and belonging as well as a moment to pause from the restlessness of life to reflect, celebrate and recollect - it can provide a sanctuary in time for all to share together. For these reasons it is important to develop an approach to collective worship which involves as many students as possible". (H.C.C. Guidance to Schools)

Practice

"Collective Worship" is quite distinct from the corporate worship of members of a particular faith. It must be open to staff and students whether they be Christians, members of other religions, humanists, agnostics or atheists, and are therefore not committed to a particular creed or form of worship.

"Worship" can be understood in the broadest sense as an activity when we pause to celebrate and reflect on things held to be of worth.

Over the course of a term the majority of themes and values explored should have a broadly spiritual character.

In order to respect the integrity of students and teachers, no assumptions should be made about their personal commitment. The selection of themes should therefore be based on the broad principles and values of Spirituality which are appropriate to students whatever their background or personal beliefs (e.g. love, honesty, conflict, and suffering). Such themes are also central to other religious traditions from which resources can be included.

Different groupings of students are appropriate for different forms of collective worship. Yearly celebrations provide opportunity for presentations, music, outside speakers and the celebration of achievements, while class based activities provide opportunity for reflection, quiet response and a rhythm to the life of the school.

Outside speakers

The school will invite only speakers who have been personally recommended, are known to a member of staff. They should be briefed on the school's requirements, time allocation and the ages and aptitudes of the students. The provisions on Fundamental British Values (see section 3 below) are also applicable to outside speakers.

Atmosphere

Care should be taken to provide an atmosphere which is conducive to collective worship. The use of music or a brief period of quiet at the start/conclusion of the gathering is helpful.

The involvement of students is a key feature of this aspect of school life, as the objective is to provide opportunity for students to pause, reflect, consider issues and make some form of response. Responses may be expressed through silent thoughts, asking questions, making a verbal statement, discussing with a neighbour or putting thoughts down on paper. It is hoped that students will learn to recognise the special time set aside for these activities and see the significance of sometimes taking a few minutes to consider those aspects of life which are about meaning and purpose.

2. Active Promotion of Fundamental British Values

In accordance with the Independent School Standards 2014, the New Forest Small School recognises its statutory duty of active promotion of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. To this end, we will ensure that principles are actively promoted throughout the whole school which:

- Enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- Encourage pupils to 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;
- Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of, and respect for, their own and other cultures;
- Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act (see below)
- Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that all staff are aware of their statutory duty to avoid promoting partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school.

The Head Teacher will take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of students at the school, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. This applies:

- while they are in attendance at the school;
- while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school;
- in relation to the promotion at the school (including through the distribution of promotional material) of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere).

In the case of extra-curricular activities, the balanced presentation of views may take place during the activity itself, or during preparation or follow-up work at the school, at the discretion of the staff involved.

3. Respect for Others

The New Forest Small School seeks to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness and mutual respect, where both students and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that all students receive a programme of personal, social, health and economic education that (a) reflects the school's aim and ethos, and (b) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy or maternity
- religion or belief
- race
- sex
- sexual orientation

4. Careers Guidance

The school will ensure that secondary-level students have access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that:

- (i) is presented in an impartial manner;
- (ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
- (iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

5. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Head Teachers, to ensure that any changes to the programme or annual activities are planned for in advance, and reviewed annually.

Related Policies: Equalities and Cohesion Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy