



LEARNING ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP SPRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL (SMSC) POLICY

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Change Log

Date	Changes to Policy
Spring 2026	Alignment with Ofsted's revised inspection framework (from Nov 2025) including emphasis on Personal Development & Wellbeing, standalone Inclusion evaluation area, coherent curriculum mapping of SMSC, strengthened monitoring/evidence expectations and narrative report-card model. Links and terminology updated where appropriate. Accessibility statement added
Summer 2024	2 policies amalgamated to combine to form 1 SMSC policy for all schools; various section updates (vision placement, British Values wording, trauma-informed approach, Religion and Worldviews, spirituality framework, knowledgeable, Ethos Advisory Committee).
Autumn 2019	Ofsted Inspection Handbook – statement updated

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Legal Requirements	3
3. Definitions	4
Spiritual.....	4
Moral.....	4
Social	4
Cultural	4
4. British Values	5
5. SMSC Practice.....	5
6. Monitoring	6

Accessibility and Language Support

If you require this policy in an alternative format or language, please contact the Academy Office. We are committed to ensuring that all colleagues have access to our policies and can fully understand and engage with them and will work with you to provide the necessary support and resources

1. Introduction

All schools within the Learning Academy Partnership (hereinafter 'The Trust') strive to meet the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development needs of all children. We fully recognise that SMSC is central to the educational entitlement of all children and that it should provide the foundation for the whole curriculum and ethos of each individual academy.

The promotion of SMSC within the Trust is fundamental to our vision of transforming children's lives and, as part of this, we place the development of the whole child at the heart of all that we do. Our trust vision 'I have come that they might have life and have it to the full.' John 10:10 underpins all that we do and strive to achieve.

We aim to provide all our children with a world-class education that provides them with opportunities to explore their own values, beliefs, opinions, attitudes and skills within a safe and nurturing environment. We support the children in developing the skills necessary to understand themselves and the world around them in order that they may be respectful, hold knowledgeable conversations, think critically and learn how to live well together in diverse and pluralistic societies.

A variety of curriculum opportunities provide experiences for all children to understand and develop their knowledge of social and cultural traditions, of diversity, and to develop a sense of self and identity.

SMSC is approached through all areas of the curriculum, and it also supports the promotion of Fundamental British Values. This is important in developing children's understanding of themselves, others, the world around them and beyond. It allows them to explore the key areas of the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual tolerance and respect and democracy.

Inclusive of this is the development of personal behaviour for all children within our academies. SMSC forms a strong foundation for behaviour expectations and, as a trust with a Christian foundation, forgiveness and the concept of starting again is central to behaviour and the expectations set for all children. Within each academy context, children will be provided with a safe environment in which they are able to explore the difference between right and wrong, the concept of rules, and the importance of rules and expectations for everyone within each academy. Positive behaviour is fundamental within each of our schools, and this helps to promote the expectation and development of respect for all. Positive behaviour is noticed and celebrated both within the classroom, within the school as a whole and for each individual child. Opportunities to notice and celebrate positive behaviour and achievements are essential and consistently promoted. Schools will also support children through a trauma informed, restorative approach to ensure that all children feel a sense of belonging and support.

This policy aligns with Ofsted's revised 2025/26 evaluation areas, recognising SMSC as a core component of Personal Development & Wellbeing and essential to coherent provision that supports pupil resilience, wellbeing, identity and voice.

The Trust recognises Ofsted's strengthened focus on emotional security, inclusion and pupil voice; SMSC provision will actively contribute to these expectations across the curriculum and wider experiences.

2. Legal Requirements

The Ofsted Inspection Handbook states:

'Inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This is a broad concept that can be seen across the school's activities but draws together many of the areas covered by the personal development judgement.'

The importance of SMSC is promoted throughout the Ofsted framework and the responsibility for schools. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/school-inspection-handbook-for-september-2023>

From November 2025, Ofsted inspects schools using revised inspection toolkits that replace the previous School Inspection Handbook. SMSC provision contributes evidence primarily to the Personal Development & Wellbeing evaluation area and, where relevant, to the standalone Inclusion evaluation area.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with Ofsted's updated evidence expectations and the new narrative report-card model.

3. Definitions

The following definitions relating to SMSC are taken from the School Inspection Handbook

Spiritual

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life
- knowledge of, 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.

Moral

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, and to recognise legal boundaries and, in doing so, 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 ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.

Social

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, for example working and socialising with other pupils, including those 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. They will develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

Cultural

- 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 in the school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain
- ability to recognise, and value, the things we share across cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities
- 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, musical, 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 and respect diversity.

This is shown by their respect and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

In line with the 2025/26 framework, SMSC is planned and experienced as an interconnected strand within a coherent curriculum, supporting pupils' sense of belonging, identity, wellbeing and readiness to participate positively in society.

4. British Values

As of November 2014, all schools are required to promote Fundamental British Values as part of their curriculum. Advice taken from the DfE states that British Values should be promoted through the provision for SMSC.

As stated in the School Inspection Handbook from September 2015, 'fundamental British Values' are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith

These values originated as part of the Prevent Strategy (2011) and also intended to support the Equality Act of 2010.

Advice outlined from the Department for Education relating to British Values can be found here https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

Within the Trust, we promote British Values throughout a variety of curriculum opportunities, SMSC provision, Religion and Worldviews, Collective Worship and (where appropriate for our Church of England Schools) Christian Distinctiveness.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance is also an integral part of our Safeguarding Policy. Any views which oppose that of British Values are challenged; this also encompasses all forms of extremist views which are counter to British Values. Within all of our academies, we will actively challenge any views that are expressed by children, staff or members of the wider school community that are contrary to the promotion of these British Values.

Under Ofsted's updated framework, British Values contribute substantively to the Personal Development & Wellbeing evaluation area. Our approach embeds these values through curriculum design, behaviour culture and wider opportunities, with explicit mapping to ensure coherence.

5. SMSC Practice

Within all of our academies, individual approaches are taken to ensure that all areas of SMSC as outlined are met. These approaches are carefully considered and planned to meet the needs of all children within their individual school contexts. We strive to provide thoughtful and meaningful opportunities for all children that give a rich variety of experiences to promote all areas of SMSC. This also incorporates the physical and mental well-being of all children. We ensure that all children are supported to develop the skills needed and to have a range of experiences to allow them to develop as active, positive, knowledgeable members within society.

SMSC is threaded throughout all areas of the curriculum. Opportunities to develop learning and to reflect are core elements that allow children to develop a sense of self, compassion for others, an understanding of the world around them and a sense of the beyond. Children can develop an enjoyment for learning, an understanding of the need for perseverance when faced with challenges and the necessary skills to overcome difficulties.

All curriculum areas should include opportunities to learn from a range of different cultural contexts, Religion and Worldviews where appropriate.

Visitors are welcomed into school to support, as part of planned curriculum opportunities, the promotion and development of SMSC. All visitors are required to work in line with our safeguarding policy requirements.

Relationships with parents and carers are essential to the promotion and development of SMSC. It is important for staff, children and parents/carers to have positive relationships to ensure that all children are supported through effective parent partnership.

Schools understand the work of local and/or national charities as part of their development of SMSC, and children will work to support charities in ways which are reflective of their context.

We strive to ensure that SMSC underpins a curriculum provision and ethos within each of our academies that enables all our children to live life to the full and that achieves excellence for all. A school trust approach to spirituality is also a framework in which schools can work to support the spiritual development of their school community, individually tailored to their context.

- SMSC will be planned and evaluated as part of a coherent programme of Personal Development, ensuring integration across subjects and beyond the curriculum rather than isolated elements.
- SMSC provision will explicitly contribute to developing pupils' resilience, confidence, independence, leadership opportunities, wellbeing, anti-bullying culture and readiness for life beyond school.
- SMSC will support the Trust's approach to Inclusion, acknowledging Ofsted's standalone Inclusion evaluation area, ensuring the needs and experiences of SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those in care are fully represented within SMSC planning.
- Curriculum and subject leads will map SMSC opportunities to the wider tapestry of personal development so pupils can see connections, reflect deeply and understand issues such as inequality, cultural identity and wellbeing.

6. Monitoring

SMSC is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by our Ethos Advisory Committees through learning walks, speaking with children, visiting schools and through the Head's Ethos Advisory Committee reports and is amended as required and when appropriate.

- Monitoring processes will align with Ofsted's narrative report-card model, ensuring evidence of SMSC contributes to commentary within the Personal Development & Wellbeing and Inclusion evaluation areas, as applicable.
- Monitoring will evaluate impact on pupil wellbeing, resilience, sense of belonging and participation in modern Britain, drawing on pupil voice, behaviour and attendance information, curriculum work and wider activity logs.
- Leaders will quality-assure the coherence of mapped SMSC opportunities and ensure that improvement actions are tracked to completion with termly reviews.