



GATEHOUSE
SCHOOL

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) Policy

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0. Document Control

The table below contains the changes made between the different final editions of this document set for approval. This is to help provide information to those reviewing and approving the document of the changes being made.

Document Edition	Section	Details of change
November 2025	All Sections	Formatting

1. Context

Gatehouse School was established by Phyllis Wallbank, the wife of the Rector of Saint Bartholomew the Great, in 1948 at Smithfield in the gatehouse of the church. The mission statement remains to this day:

“Children of any race, colour, creed, background and intellect shall be accepted as students and work side by side without streaming or any kind of segregation, with the aim that each child shall get to know and love God, and develop their own uniqueness of personality to enable them to appreciate the world and the world to appreciate them.”

The school feels strongly that all children, regardless of ability, race, religion or gender, will be given the opportunity to develop their skills and increase their confidence in order to achieve their full potential.

While Gatehouse has a broad Christian ethos, pupils are free to practise their own faiths, and the beliefs of children who are not Christian are respected. Pupils also learn about the diverse cultures, religions, and communities in the UK to promote respect and understanding, and the British value of tolerance.

Ofsted has described spiritual development as follows:

“Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence which are of enduring worth. It is characterised by reflection, the attribution of meaning to experience, valuing a non-material dimension to life and intimations of an enduring reality.”

At best, spirituality should be understood as a process of transformation and growth; something dynamic which is part and parcel of the full human development of the individual and society.

Spiritual development is not, of course, confined to a set of specific religious beliefs or conversion to a particular faith. It has to do with a wider range of processes reflected in the definitions above to do with meaning, purpose, value and insight. Therefore, the beliefs of those pupils who are not Christian or have no formal religious beliefs are valued.

While Gatehouse School draws heavily from the Christian tradition for its inspiration, it also encourages those who seek spiritual growth through other religious traditions which also value compassion, hope, justice, fairness, tolerance and respect for human life. All reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the religious observances of non-Christian faiths. Pupils are also taught about the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.

Much has been made of the phrase “Awe and Wonder” in recent literature about moral and spiritual development. As a school we encourage pupils to stop and notice, rather than pass on, in the pursuit of

absorbing as much information as possible. We believe this is a very important part of growth in the life of any human being.

The practical needs of the School demand an agreed moral code. Pupils value this and understand its purpose. The moral development of any child is cumulative and, as with intellectual development, pupils will develop at different rates.

2. Policy on Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Pupil's Moral and Spiritual Development

The school aims to encourage pupils' moral, spiritual and cultural development and to create an ethos of tolerance of all religious and minority groups, thus promoting fundamental British Values. Pupils' development in this area is addressed implicitly in the following ways:

- School aim
- Pupils' behaviour and attitude
- The curriculum (including RE & PSHE)
- Circle time
- Pupils' relationships
- The school rules
- The rewards and support system
- Assemblies
- Pastoral guidance and support
- School organisation and communication
- School commitment to charity (eg: singing to the elderly eg: Neighbours in Poplar, Great Ormond St. hospital charity run...)

Other areas where evidence of the promotion of moral, spiritual and cultural aspects may be found would include:

- Acknowledgement and display of a variety of faiths and beliefs.
- Giving students responsibility, e.g PLT, Deputy PLT, focus Pupils voice groups, school councils, and eco Warriors.
- Buddy systems or peer mentoring – older pupils supporting younger ones, fostering responsibility and empathy
- Awards and Celebratory Assemblies to recognise achievement and effort
- Opportunities for pupil-led initiatives – allowing children to plan small projects, helping them develop leadership and decision-making skills.
- International day: learning about festivals from different religions or countries.

- An extremely varied extracurricular, including clubs, sports and creative activities
- Active and practical involvement in fundraising for charity. promoting teamwork and social responsibility
- Entering competitions, both academic and extra-curricular to develop confidence and skills
- Residential journeys and field trips.
- Visits to, for example, the theatre, Houses of Parliament and sports matches.
- Sports teams.
- Raising awareness of opportunities offered by external agencies
- We regularly welcome visits from a wide range of professional partners and community organisations who enrich our pupils' learning and personal development. Examples include:
- Visits from local police or fire services to teach about safety, rules, and community responsibility.
- Visits from environmental organisations to promote sustainability and care for the environment.
- Visits from local authors or storytellers to promote literacy, creativity, and cultural awareness.
- Educational outreach programmes run by universities or STEM organisations to inspire curiosity and a love of learning.
- Community arts or music groups running workshops or performances at the school.
- Regular visits from professional partners such as Rose Hudson-Wilkin and Holroyd Howe, who lead sessions and assemblies related to faith, food, and nutrition, helping pupils develop understanding and respect for different beliefs and healthy lifestyles.

3. Practical Examples of How Each Element of SMSC and Fundamental British Values Are Developed at Gatehouse School

3.1 Spiritual Development

As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Sustain their self-esteem in their learning experience.
- Develop their capacity for critical and independent thought.
- Foster their emotional life and express their feelings
- Experience moments of stillness and reflection.
- Discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences.
- Form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
- Reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.
- Moral Development As a school we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable pupils to:
 - Recognise the unique value of each individual.
 - Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others.
 - Gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes.
 - Take initiative and act responsibly with consideration for others.

- Distinguish between right and wrong.
- Show respect for the environment.
- Make informed and independent judgements.

3.2 Social Development

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Develop an understanding of their individual and group identity, for example through taking on responsibilities such as litter collectors, meal supervisors, assembly monitors, and uniform monitors, which encourage teamwork, leadership, and pride in belonging to our school community.
- Learn about service in the school and wider community.

3.2 Cultural Development

As a school we aim to promote opportunities that will enable pupils to:

- Recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influenced individuals and society.
- Develop an understanding of their social and cultural environment.
- Develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions.

4. Conclusion

The moral and spiritual development of pupils at Gatehouse School emerges naturally from the religious, cultural and social character of the school. While our policy is inspired by our Christian heritage, we also celebrate and respect the range of religious traditions represented by our pupils. We strongly encourage pupils to share proudly their culture, heritage and religion.

Moral and spiritual development happens both through lessons and through activities and opportunities provided outside the classroom, including assemblies, clubs, and school events and visiting speakers.

Fundamental British Values, such as respect, fairness, and responsibility, are central to the school's ethos and are actively promoted in everyday school life for both adults and children. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for modelling and sharing the Fundamental British Values, inspiring others and making a positive impact on the world around them.

This policy is practical and its application is regularly reviewed to make sure it continues to support all pupils effectively.

The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014
Amendment to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010

We follow adhere to the following ISI Standards:

2. (1) The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010(1) are amended as follows.

(2) In Part 2 of Schedule 1 (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils), for paragraph 5 substitute—

“5. The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor—

- (a) 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;
- (b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which—
 - (i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self- confidence
 - (ii) enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
 - (iii) 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;
 - (iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
 - (v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.
 - (vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010(2); and
 - (vii) 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;
- (c) precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school; and
- (d) takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils—
 - 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; or
 - During promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere; they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.”.