

# British Overseas School Policy: Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education Policy



## A. Introduction

The BOS curriculum is designed to allow each student to:

- become successful learners, who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve their academic potential;
- become independent learners who develop the powers to question, analyse and create
- become confident adults who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives;
- become responsible citizens who can make a positive contribution to society.

The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) curriculum is a very important part of the school's mission and fundamental to the school's culture.

In a city in which education is dominated by grades and tuitions – at almost every level, the BOS prides itself on its broader perspective. It is committed to developing happy children as well as hard working children; to developing aware young adults as well as successful students.

Important aspects of this personal development are

- Spiritual Development
- Moral Development
- Social Development
- Cultural Development

## B. Spiritual Development

The school will help its students to develop:

- a set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour
- an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs

- a respect for themselves and for others
- a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion
- an ability to show courage in defence of their beliefs
- a readiness to challenge all that would constrain the human spirit (for example: poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, farce, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination)
- an appreciation of the intangible (e.g. beauty, truth, love, order, as well as mystery, paradox and ambiguity)
- a respect for insight as well as knowledge and reason
- an expressive and/or creative impulse
- an ability to think in terms of the 'whole' (for example: concepts such as harmony, interdependence, scale, perspective, and on understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely impact)

## C. Moral Development

The school will help its students to develop:

- 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 light of experience

## D. Social Development

The school will help students to:

- adjust to a range of social contexts by appropriate and sensible 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
- show 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

## E. Cultural Development

The school will help students to develop:

- 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

## F. SMSC in the Curriculum

SMSC is integrated into both our formal and informal curriculums.

### 1. The Formal Curriculum

The formal curriculum contains clear opportunities for SMSC enhancement.

In the primary school this includes the International Primary Curriculum (IPC); in the secondary school, Religious Studies (RS) classes. Both subjects offer students opportunities to learn about beliefs, cultures and societies and with that understanding to become, not only more tolerant of differences, but to become more inquisitive and curious about differences and embrace diversity.

SMSC principles will also be explored in less obvious areas of the curriculum. Science, literature, history, art and ICT, to name a few, all offer opportunities to develop students' abilities to better understand different perspectives, to appreciate the importance of relationships and to foster creativity, reason and intuition.

These opportunities arise through the approach to teaching, for example class discussions and group work, as well as through well-planned content. Although the school believes that lessons should be well-planned and structured, we also encourage teachers to be flexible, to listen to students and to take time to explore ideas, views and issues that are raised, but were not planned.

Outside the classroom the formal curriculum also offers opportunities to enhance SMSC through for example, assemblies and circle and form time. Class and Form Tutors should be aware of opportunities to enhance SMSC beyond PSHE, by for example discussing and reinforcing school rules, students' rights and values such as democracy, liberty, responsibilities and obligations.

In the secondary school, SMSC is also addressed through our Co-curricular Programme, which every fortnight, takes senior students out into the community to work with our local partners to perform community service.

## 2. The Enrichment Curriculum

A great deal of learning takes place outside of these formal structures: break time, enrichment activities, team and individual sports, drama, school trips, charitable work and community service. The school considers all of these to be important learning opportunities and makes every effort to ensure that students make the most of the opportunities.

The school makes a wide range of activities available to students to enrich their learning and their personal development. These include Student Council, leadership positions, house competitions, school teams and school trips.

Prominent among these routes to personal development is Round Square. By working with Round Square's IDEALS and Discoveries we are able to work with Secondary (and soon with Primary) pupils to enhance their personal growth.

Such is the importance that the school places on learning that would traditionally be associated with the "informal curriculum" we seek to incorporate that learning into the

more formal timetable. In the traditional classroom, this would include group and teamwork, presentations and role play.

We also seek to innovate within the curriculum by incorporating activities, which would traditionally be viewed as “informal”, into the more traditional framework, giving students the opportunity to go “off-timetable”, to explore different kinds of learning and to develop different kinds of skills and attributes.

### 3. SMSC & The School Community

The BOS is a community. In a city that suffers from security, economic and social issues it is an important part of many people’s lives – for staff and parents a safe harbour, an institution upon which they can rely in times of difficulty.

The school understands its privileged status and the responsibilities that accompany it. Therefore, the school seeks to foster an atmosphere of trust, openness and approachability to allow the whole school community to benefit from it as a centre of learning.

For the staff the school provides extensive CPD to allow for their professional development, but it also offers a place in which to share problems, seek support and benefit from advice. In some cases, for example, that support may be emotional, in others it may be financial.

Similarly, for parents, the school provides a place in which to socialise and to make new friends, but it also offers guidance on a wide range of parenting issues. With a dearth of reliable support agencies in the city, the BOS becomes a centre for support, advice and guidance.

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