

# Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy 2026-2028

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<b>Reviewers:</b>	AHT
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## 1. Aims

At Hook Junior School, we strive to create a learning environment which promotes respect, diversity and self-awareness and equips all of our pupils with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they will need to succeed in their future lives.

Our school ethos is built on inclusivity and the expectation that everyone is valued as an individual in their own right; everyone is treated with respect and high standards of behaviour underpinned by our school values.

The aim of SMSC as Hook Junior School is to:

- develop children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural and for this to be reflected in children's thoughts, behaviours and deeds
- provide children with a firm understanding of each discrete aspect of SMSC
- to provide children with skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to show empathy, sympathy, appreciation to make informed decisions in a diverse world

Through SMSC we are able to educate children as part of our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

## 2. Statutory Requirements

We have an obligation 'under section 78 of the Education Act (2002), as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society'.

All schools are required to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils. This is explained in paragraph 237 of Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook (November 2025).

This policy has been based on:

- Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook (November 2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance (for implementation September 2026)
- Prevent Strategy 2011
- Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (DfE guidance)
- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in England
- Behaviour in schools (DfE advice)

### **3. Links to Safeguarding and Child Protection**

SMSC provision plays a crucial role in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

Our SMSC curriculum supports pupils to develop:

- The skills that form the building blocks of all positive relationships
- Understanding of healthy and respectful relationships
- Knowledge of boundaries, consent and kindness in relationships
- Awareness of stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem

The ability to recognise and report concerns about an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour. Our preventative education through SMSC is most effective in the context of our whole-school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

Our school has a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. These are underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.

## **4. Definitions**

### **Spiritual Development**

Pupils' spiritual development is shown by their:

- 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, including the intangible
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences

### **Moral Development**

Pupils' moral development is shown by their:

- 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 Development**

Pupils' social development is shown by their:

- Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- Willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, co-operating 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 Development**

Pupils' cultural development is shown by their:

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

## **5. Curriculum Content**

The curriculum provides a wide range of artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities that encourage pupils to work together and use imagination in their learning. Activities are planned that require pupils to reflect and empathise with others as well as giving them the confidence to provide their opinions and develop their own view points.

A strong emphasis on whole child development means Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural understanding drives the values-led concept-based curriculum at Hook Junior School. The School Value model integrates school values and British Values to provide 4 core overarching values (Responsibility, Respect, Empathy and Inclusion) which then provide the framework for core concepts as themes for all cross-curricular subject planning. In this way, SMSC is embedded across the curriculum as well as being taught explicitly.

Through our curriculum, we therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop:

- To encourage pupils to develop their own beliefs and values about life and religion.
- To promote an appreciation of alternative individual and shared beliefs.

- To develop appropriate personal and social behaviour in response to other cultures and environments.
- To develop an awareness of oneself in terms of thoughts, feelings, emotions, responsibilities and experiences and the development of self-respect.
- To recognise and value the worth of individuals, developing a sense of community and the ability to build relationships with others.
- To promote curiosity in order to make sense of the world.
- To protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

SMSC is a dimension which adds to the effectiveness of the whole school experience, it assists in making the curriculum personal, relevant, stimulating, creative and fun.

All curriculum areas have a contribution to make to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum.

## **6. Curriculum Delivery**

### **6.1 What we teach**

#### **Spiritual Development**

We plan opportunities for spiritual development in all subjects in all year groups. Children are given opportunities to reflect upon the meaning of spiritual experiences. Examples of experiences commonly regarded as spiritual include:

- Curiosity and mystery
- Awe and wonder
- Connection and belonging
- Heightened self-awareness
- Prayer and worship
- Deep feelings of what is felt to be ultimately important
- A sense of security, well-being, worth and purposefulness

We will develop an ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected; accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals. Spiritual experiences can occur during any part of a school day, e.g. when listening to music; exercising empathy or creativity, within RE lessons and collective worships.

#### **Moral Development**

We believe that a morally aware pupil has a wide range of skills. These can include the ability to:

- Distinguish right from wrong, based on knowledge of the moral codes of their own and other cultures
- Develop an ability to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions
- Have an ability to make responsible and reasoned judgements
- Ensure a commitment to personal values
- Have respect for others' needs, interests and feelings, as well as their own
- Develop a desire to explore their own and others' views, and an understanding of the need to review and re-assess their values, codes and principles in the light of experience

Our school develops pupils' moral development by:

- Providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality
- Giving pupils 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
- Developing an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practice moral decision making
- Rewarding expressions of moral insights and good behaviour
- Recognising and respecting the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the school and wider community
- Encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions, for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour, providing models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts and assemblies; reinforcing the school's values through images, posters, classroom displays, etc. and monitoring in simple ways, the success of what is provided

Staff will discuss with their classes a code of conduct for the classroom based on the school values and aims. We teach the children to be aware of their own actions, take responsibility for their own bodies and encourage independence. We will help the children to identify their feelings and think these through so that they are expressed in behaviour that is socially acceptable.

This is developed through collective worship, circle time and links within the curriculum. We are interested in the development of the whole child and will endeavour to raise their self-esteem through praise, raffle tickets, Star of the Week and other means that highlight both academic and social achievements (please refer to our Behaviour Policy).

### **Social Development**

At Hook Junior School we recognise that pupils who are becoming socially aware are likely to be developing 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
- Share views and opinions with others
- Resolve conflicts maturely and appropriately
- Reflect on their contribution to society
- Show respect for people, living things, property and the environment
- Exercise responsibility
- Understand how societies function and are organised in structures such as the family, the school
- Understand the notion of interdependence in an increasingly complex society

Our school develops pupil social development by:

- Identifying key values and principles on which school and community life is based
- Fostering a sense of community, with common, inclusive values
- Promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality
- Encouraging pupils to work co-operatively
- Encouraging pupils to recognise and respect social differences and similarities
- Providing positive experiences to reinforce our values as a school community – for example, through assemblies, team building activities, residential experiences, school productions
- Helping pupils develop personal qualities which are valued in a civilised society, for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, interdependence, self-respect and an awareness of others' needs

- Providing opportunities for engaging in the democratic process and participating in community life
- Providing opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility
- Providing positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community
- Monitoring in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided

### **Cultural Development**

Children will be made aware of the diversity of other cultures both within modern Britain and throughout the world throughout our curriculum and school experience as a whole.

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

- An ability to reflect on important questions of meaning and identity
- An interest in exploring the relationship between human beings and the environment

Our school develops pupils' cultural development by:

- Extending pupils' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language
- Encouraging them to think about special events in life and how they are celebrated
- Recognising and nurturing particular gifts and talents; providing opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encouraging pupils to reflect on their significance
- Reinforcing the school's cultural links through our PSHE curriculum, displays and resources and developing partnerships with outside agencies and individuals.
- Auditing the quality and nature of opportunities for pupils to extend their cultural development across the curriculum

### **British Values**

British values are defined as 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs', although these values are not wholly unique to Britain alone.

#### **Democracy**

Democracy is embedded both in our curriculum, the history and purpose of democracy is also taught discretely. Pupils will be listened to by adults and taught to listen carefully and with concern to each other, respecting the right of every individual to have their opinions and voices heard. Pupils will have the opportunity to air their opinions and ideas through our School Council. The elections of the School Council members and House Captains are based staff and pupil votes, reflecting our British electoral system and demonstrating democracy in action. Pupils have the opportunity to debate (written/verbally) in a range of curriculum areas and may be selected for focus groups by subject leaders.

#### **The Rule of Law**

The importance of laws, whether they are those that govern the class, the school or the country, is consistently reinforced. Our school has a set of agreed rules, which are deeply embedded in our ethos and practice. Each class discuss these rules to ensure that are clearly understood by all, and seen to be necessary, to ensure that every class member is able to learn in a safe and ordered environment. Our pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. In addition, pupils in upper school explore the differences between criminal and civil laws, how the British justice system works and how laws such as The Equality Act (2010) protect our freedoms.

#### **Individual Liberty**

Within school, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for our pupils to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. Our pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these safely; examples of this can be clearly seen in our Computing E-safety lessons and are embedded throughout the school's PSHE curriculum. Alongside this, pupils have whole school/ class assemblies daily which includes celebration assembly. Pupils have a variety of playground play choices and extra-curricular club choices that they may wish to attend.

### **Mutual Respect**

Respect is one of the core values of our school. Pupils know and understand that it is expected and imperative that respect is shown to everyone, whatever differences we may have and to everything, however big or small. Through collective worship, role modelling and our PSHE curriculum, pupils learn how to respect and value others opinions and how to actively voice their own views in a respectful way.

### **Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs**

Hook Junior School welcomes people of all backgrounds and enhances pupils' understanding of different faiths and beliefs through religious education studies, PSHE and concept-based topics. Traditions and customs are studied in depth, with visitors being invited in to our school, and trips to enrich and extend understanding. Through this our pupils gain depth of understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society.

## **5.2 How we teach it**

SMSC, including British Values is planned as both an integrated part of all subjects and as a discrete set of learning experiences. In planning lessons, teachers plan opportunities to develop a wide variety of spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs, including the promotion of British Values. A vast majority will be delivered through cross curricular activities as well as specific PSHE, RE and Collective Worship themes.

All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals and showing respect for pupils and their families.

## **5.3 Adaptions**

Inclusivity is part of our SMSC philosophy. Teachers acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognize the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. Teachers will need, as always, to tailor activities to meet the needs of the children in their classes and those individuals within them. Hook Junior School offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn and to identify ways to improve their learning.

## **5.4 SEND**

The DfE guidance states: 'Lessons should be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.' This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large minority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.' The Equalities Act provides the guiding principle that pupils with additional needs must be able to participate in the curriculum, so the SMSC curriculum must be accessible to all pupils.

The guidance highlights the needs for schools to be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. SMSC can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors should be taken

into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects. Schools should also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

At Hook Junior School, we acknowledge that for some pupils there will be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. We will ensure that our teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally-appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

## **6. Resources**

In the light of this, we will ensure that the SMSC development of our pupils is promoted across the curriculum and in the wider life of the school by:

- Recognising the importance of our collective worship programme in supporting and encouraging SMSC development, including teaching the Equalities Act 2010 and aspects of global education.
- Planning and provision for teaching aspects of SMSC through Collective Worship using a range of resources, for example the “My Happy Minds” programme, weekly “Picture news” and “No Outsiders”
- Providing a detailed long term plan covering all aspects of SMSC and detailing the curriculum intent for these and related areas, particularly Relationships, Health and Sex education. This plan is under constant review so that we can take into account our rapidly changing world and learning opportunities which arise under this heading
- Providing an appropriate range of effective teaching and learning resources and strategies as above that enable pupils to reflect on and respond to the issues of SMSC importance and concern
- Encouraging teachers to plan for and respond to opportunities to develop SMSC development and to ensure curriculum leaders have evidence of provision for SMSC education in their subject maintain a positive climate in school in which all are valued and respected and expected to make a positive contribution

## **7. Assessment**

Assessment plays a key role in effective SMSC teaching and learning. Assessment is a process through which judgements are made about an individual’s learning and development. We assess pupils’ learning in SMSC in line with approaches used in the rest of the curriculum at Hook Junior School. We report to parents/carers at the end of the school year on pupils’ learning and progress in SMSC as part of the PSHE curriculum.

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

### **8.1 The Governing Body**

The governing body has delegated the approval of this policy to the headteacher.

### **8.2 The Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that SMSC is taught consistently across the school.

### **8.3 PSHE Leader**

The PSHE Leader is responsible for implementing the PSHE curriculum, for monitoring standards and supporting staff to deliver high quality learning in PSHE.

### **8.3 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering SMSC in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to SMSC

- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

#### **8.4 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in SMSC and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

### **9. Monitoring arrangements**

The quality of teaching and learning in SMSC is monitored and evaluated by the PSHE leader and Senior Leadership Team. The planning and co-ordination of teaching SMSC are the responsibility of the PSHE Leader who also:

- Supports colleagues in their teaching practice and professional development by keeping informed about current developments in the subject, and by providing a strategic lead and direction for SMSC;
- Seeks pupil views about SMSC and uses this to inform future planning
- Reviews planning and provision of SMSC across the curriculum
- Analyses pupil outcomes and evidence to determine the impact of our SMSC curriculum
- The quality of teaching and learning in SMSC is monitored and evaluated.

### **10. Links with other policies**

The SMSC policy should be read in conjunction with the following Hook Junior School policies:

- PSHE Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Sex ,Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment for learning
- SEN code of Practice
- Equal opportunities
- Curriculum Policy
- Inclusion Policy