



SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL (SMSC) POLICY

Autumn Term 2024

DUE FOR RENEWAL: AUTUMN TERM 2025

CHANGES

Sept 2022

Policy implemented

Sept 2024

Minor changes made to the policy, including a section on Teaching & Learning.

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1. OUR VISION

Our Trust's vision is to ensure that every child is able to thrive and achieve their full potential, through quality learning experiences. We also ensure that our children are safe, secure and happy during their time with us and endeavour to fully prepare them for their next stage in learning and for their adult lives.

To achieve our vision, we will:

- Encourage all of our children and staff to excel and collaborate with one another, to ensure the best outcomes and progress for all.
- Develop joyful learning communities that work together to improve standards and outcomes for our children, as part of a wider community.
- Ensure that we remain committed to the following values that underpin the way we work:
DEMOCRATIC, INCLUSIVE, EXCELLING COLLABORATIVE

2. SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL (SMSC) STATEMENT

This document outlines the overview of SMSC provision at Discovery Multi-Academy Trust. We ensure that all opportunities are taken to develop collaborative and trusting relationships that will support and develop long term success for all of our students, regardless of barrier or need. Every subject area within our schools promotes the development of observant, thoughtful and reflective students. We will create an environment of high expectations, aspirations and self-belief for everybody involved in our Trust. We aim for our young people to be successful, self-confident citizens of the future.

3. INTRODUCTION

At Discovery Multi-Academy Trust we aim to provide a safe, caring and happy environment where there is an opportunity to grow spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides learners with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive and caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the cultures, particularly British culture.

All learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) values will be respected, and those whose values may be different from the majority will always be shown great sensitivity.

4. AIMS

Each of the schools within the Trust aims to create an ethos which fosters the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children. SMSC is developed through:

- promoting SMSC across the curriculum, so that all students benefit from high quality teaching and learning which motivates challenges and empowers them
- the whole curriculum, including PSHE
- promoting British Values across assemblies
- extra-curricular activities
- opportunities for 'pupil voice' and student leadership
- developing a sense of integrity, compassion and tolerance throughout the community which values self-esteem alongside respect for others
- enhancing opportunities through partnerships between parents, students, staff, the local community, industry and commerce for students to explore the wider world, demonstrating that we are a Mentally Healthy Organisation (TISUK)

The Trust is committed to offering children the opportunities to:

- identify, reflect on and explore experiences and distinguish between right and wrong
- discuss moral issues and develop and talk about their own attitudes and values.
- take responsibility for their own decisions.
- develop an understanding of social responsibilities and citizenship.
- celebrate a diversity of cultures.

5. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The primary aim of spiritual education is to underline the spiritual concerns of humanity e.g. matters of life, the purpose of life, choices in life etc. Along with promoting opportunities for learners to reflect upon aspects of their own lives.

The Trust supports the process of acquiring positive personal beliefs and values as:

- an active basis for personal and social behaviour.
- for the consideration and reflections of actions, words and the world as it is around us.
- the seeking of answers to 'deeper' questions.

Spiritual development is experienced largely through Religious Education; lessons aid children to gain insight into their own religious beliefs and loyalties, identify their personal and spiritual values and practices so that they may take up their own spiritual allegiances. Moreover, it contributes to the moral and social development of our young people, developing consideration for others, an appreciation of human rights and responsibilities and a concern for justice in society. Also, it develops in children respect for the practices of different religious faiths and a sympathetic understanding of their underlying values and concerns. It should develop tolerance for the variety of beliefs and the customs of the citizens of our world.

It is expected that wider opportunities exist in the school's curriculum that enable children to think about religion and appreciate the variety of faiths by: using art, drama, music, languages, science and technology as well as humanities to heighten awareness of the spiritual dimension in our lives creating tasks which question children and enable them to work out their own position on issues, both moral and religious.

Whole school assemblies and celebrations also allow for opportunities to appreciate a variety of faiths and religions, including but not exclusively - Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter celebrations.

6. MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Moral Development:

- promote opportunities for learners to uphold a series of moral values.
- encourages children to develop fundamental principles about behaviour and the reasons for different types of behaviours
- helps children to develop the skills and confidence to make decisions
- gives children the confidence to listen to and respect the thinking of answers to questions about the universe

The aims of curriculum work can be summarised as follows:

- to stimulate children into giving expression to their own moral beliefs and understanding
- to challenge them into trying to justify their beliefs and understanding with reasons
- to enable them to share with others their reflections, listen to others and empower them to resolve their disagreements
- to help them apply their growing moral competence in the context of vocational experience and the workplace
- to facilitate the extending and generating of their moral reflections beyond their own immediate experience to national and international issues.

Key moral values within our schools are:

- self-respect and integrity
- respecting the rights and property of others
- doing the right thing
- the importance of telling the truth
- friendship loyalty to particular groups
- the ethic of work
- making the right choices
- managing conflict
- trust and confidentiality
- human rights
- personal judgement laws and their justification, civil rights and duties

It is expected that opportunities exist within the curriculum that enable children to explore these moral values including English, Drama, History, PSHE and RE – whereby pupils may study such concepts as conflict, tension, love and hate. These values are also explored within Science, where pupils may discuss concepts of scientific discovery and technological development which might cause moral problems and dilemmas e.g. genetics, pollution, atomic power, greenhouse effect etc. There are also wider opportunities to explore moral values through assemblies, visitors to the schools and educational visits. Extra-curricular opportunities involving moral development are also provided for pupils including anti-bullying lessons and online-safety. Our Managing & Supporting Positive Behaviour Policy also prioritises the importance of restorative work after any sanction.

7. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Through social development children acquire the skills and personal qualities necessary for individuals to live and function effectively in society. This requires an understanding of society in all aspects, its structures and principles and life as a citizen, parent or worker in a community. Children are encouraged to have increasing awareness of their own identity as individuals and a need to work with the feelings and wishes of others. Both the formal curriculum and extra-curricular activities promote team work and co-operation. The development of social skills is monitored. Supportive measures are available where they may be needed, particularly through the use of ELSA/Thrive practitioners. Teachers may also at times actively guide children to work in groups outside of friendship groups.

- Expected standards of behaviour are discussed with children by all staff. All staff and learners follow the Ready, Respectful, Safe rules.
- There is a planned programme of Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE) which aims to develop student awareness of moral issues as well as fostering a sense of responsibility and community values.
- Positive recognition of pupil achievement, behaviour and attendance is shared and recorded in each school e.g. through individual school reward systems including star learners, recognition boards, school rewards and certificates of achievement.
- Records are kept of SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) needs and concerns are regularly monitored and prompt action is taken when required.
- Teachers complete Behaviour, Attendance and Education (BAE) audits, three times a year, for pupils. This highlights any learners who have specific concerns or needs in these areas. Support is then put in place often through the support of Thrive/ELSA practitioners.
- HUT provision (Helping Us Thrive) is available in each school, which provides a space for SEMH interventions (1:1, or in small groups).
- Individuals are encouraged to participate in enrichment activities outside of the normal school timetable.
- Effective communications are maintained between the school and parents to ensure children maximise their potential. Formal parental contact is made during annual parent welcome meetings, parent evenings and through formal written school reports. However regular informal contact is made through the Trust's open-door policy, which includes daily pick up/drop offs, telephone calls, emails and requested meetings in school with individual members of staff.
- In any aspect of the curriculum, external speakers are used to expose the children to a variety of viewpoints and opinions. The emphasis is to allow children to take responsibility for their own actions and provide them with a solid base of information on which to build their own perspectives, self-confidence and self-control.

8. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Through cultural development children gain an understanding of those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills that bond together to form cultures. Cultural development is closely related to, and integrates, certain aspects of spiritual, moral and social development. The school reinforces the values and customs of society as a whole and celebrates diversity and multi-culturalism. The cultural influences of home, community and religion are explored in order to extend the children's awareness and breadth of understanding. This is achieved through the formal curriculum, through extra-curricular activities and the value placed overtly on the children's own cultural interests and achievements and the way in which they enrich their experiences of all aspects of culture.

Discovery MAT seeks to provide an education, which not only develops and strengthens children's current awareness, but also allows them to develop new cultural insights by:

- avoiding cultural bias
- promoting an appreciation of cultural diversity

Children should be able to:

- know about their own culture and society and value their own cultural identity
- be aware of, and celebrate, cultural diversity
- understand the interdependence of groups within society
- know about societies and cultures other than their own
- be aware of the principal ways in which different people interpret the world

Cultural Developments within the curriculum:

The school seeks to enhance the cultural development of children by way of:

- the formal and wider curriculum
- extra-curricular activities
- incorporating children's own home influences into discussions

9. TEACHING & LEARNING

Development in SMSC will take place across all curriculum areas, within activities that encourage pupils to recognise the spiritual dimension of their learning, reflect on the significance of what they are learning, and to recognise any challenges that there may be to their own attitude and lifestyle. Teachers will inspire pupils through the enthusiasm for, and modelling of, learning. Teachers at Discovery MAT will use creative strategies and challenging questions to engage pupils in their learning and relate it to their own experiences. All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

Class discussions and reflective group time will give pupils the opportunities to:

- Talk about personal experiences and feelings.
- Express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs.
- Speak about difficult events e.g. bullying, death etc.
- Share thoughts and feelings with other people.
- Explore relationships with friends/family/others.
- Consider other needs and behaviour.
- Show empathy.
- Develop self-esteem and a respect for others.
- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Develop the skills and attitudes that enable pupils to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally e.g. empathy, respect, open mindedness, sensitivity, understanding, forgiveness and critical awareness.

Many curriculum areas provide opportunities to:

- Listen and talk to each other.
- Learn an awareness of treating all as equals, and accepting people who are different from themselves in terms of their personal beliefs, physicality, ethnicity and ability.
- Agree and disagree.
- Take turns and share equipment.

- Work co-operatively and collaboratively.

Extra-curricular activities:

Personal development is also enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities e.g. sport, drama, the arts and forest schools - which provide opportunities for SMSC and for inspiring pupils to broaden their experiences and horizons.

Trips & Visits

Pupils have the opportunity to attend a variety of trips and visits throughout their time at school, these are mostly linked to the curriculum and include, but not extensively, the local library, the park, local beaches, museums and galleries, Dartmoor, the Tamar Bridge and local places of worship.

There are also opportunities for pupils to attend residential trips, which include Nethercott Farm, North Devon - in Year 4. In Year 5 pupils are offered the opportunity to attend an adventure/activity based residential trip e.g. PGL. In Year 6 pupils can visit a UK city, usually this is to London to experience the sights and culture of the capital city. Residential trips provide a wonderful opportunity for our pupils to encounter different places, people and experiences and allow them to build upon and improve their key life-skills including independence, team work and confidence. Ultimately these trips also provide our pupils with unforgettable life-long experiences.

The Discovery List

Every year group, in each of the schools, also makes links to the 'Discovery List' of activities to widen opportunities and experiences. We aim for every child to have the experience these, from the time they join us in Nursery to the time they leave us in Year 6. In varying these wider opportunities, we hope to enhance the skills and knowledge that the children have, making those crucial connections within their learning.

10. PROMOTING FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES

Discovery Multi-Academy Trust actively promotes the fundamental British values of:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

This is achieved through the effective spiritual, moral and cultural development of our children, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and extra-curricular activities, through our links with both the local community and the wider world. In promoting our children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC), we demonstrate our commitment to actively promoting fundamental British values in ways which are appropriate to our children' age and ability.

We will enable our children to understand that while different people may hold different views about what is 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law. The ethos and teaching of our school, which we will make parents aware of, will support the rule of English civil and criminal law and we will not teach anything that undermines it. In our teaching about religious law, we will take particular care to explore the relationship between state and religious law. Our children will be made aware of the difference between the law of our land and religious law.

The provision for SMSC and the promotion and monitoring of Modern British Values will be implemented using the following methods:

- Throughout the curriculum where appropriate and relevant.
- Promotion of the Trust values (Democratic, Inclusive, Excelling, Collaborative).
- Promotion of the school values.
- Ready, Respectful, Safe rules shared and displayed across the schools.
- Whole-School assemblies linked to current topics, the wider world and the celebration of main cultural events.
- SMSC thought-provoking displays to encourage discussion surrounding SMSC and Modern British Values.
- Links to SMSC on displays across the school to celebrate children's work and achievements.
- The use of reward systems and recognition boards to give children a sense of belonging and self-worth.
- Circle Time used within the timetable, as and when needed/or appropriate.
- 'Star of the Week' postcards sent home to share and celebrate success with parents.
- Thrive/ELSA practitioners to enable children to discuss issues surrounding their behavioural, or SEMH needs.
- Restorative Practices within school.
- HUT provision (Helping Us Thrive) which provides a space for SEMH interventions (1:1, or in small groups).
- NSPCC sponsored events and other charity events.
- Whole school/year group/class portfolios to celebrate work on SMSC (and PSHE) and any celebration of key events/days e.g. visitor experiences, trips, charity work or events.
- International Day/Weeks celebrating a variety of cultures.
- SMSC Day/Mentally Healthy Day/Wellbeing Day.
- Additional responsibilities for children such as School Champions, Playtime Monitors, Librarians, Eco Squad and Head Girl & Head Boy.
- Regular monitoring of the curricular and extra-curricular activities by the Curriculum Lead.
- Pupil Voice.

Through our schools' SMSC provision, we will;

- enable our children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- enable our children to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- encourage our children to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- enable our children to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- further develop tolerance and harmony between our country's different cultural traditions by enabling our children to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people; and encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

11. LINKS WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY

- Visitors are welcomed into school
- The Trust will support the work of a variety of charities.
- Learners take part in activities such as Remembrance Day, Comic Relief, Sport Relief, visits to local businesses, enterprise weeks, school fairs etc.
- The development of strong home-school links are regarded as very important, enabling parents/carers and teachers to work in an effective partnership to support the learners.
- Learners will be taught to appreciate their local environment and to develop a sense of responsibility towards it through residential opportunities, outdoor education and events e.g. Mount Edgumbe day, residential trips.
- Liaison with local secondary schools to support the curriculum and transition process.

12. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Discovery Multi-Academy Trust will review this policy every year and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout each of the schools. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Trust Central Leadership Team will monitor SMSC alongside the promotion of Modern British Values.

13. THE UNCRC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights. Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. **SEE APPENDIX A.**

At Discovery MAT we work with these rights to guide everything we do. The following rights are particularly pertinent to this policy:

Article 3 (best interests of the child)

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 2 (without discrimination)

The Convention applies to every child whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, no matter what type of family they come from.

Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)

Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 28 (right to education)

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's human dignity. Wealthy countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29 (goals of education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

14. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy should be read and followed in conjunction with the following policies:

- Managing and Supporting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Relationships & Sex Education Policy
- SEND & Inclusion Policy
- Curriculum and Teaching & Learning Policy

APPENDIX A



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



Survival



You have a right to life, good food, water, and to grow up healthy

Development



You have a right to an education and time to relax and play

Participation



You have a right to say how you feel, be listened to, and taken seriously

<p>1 Everyone under 18 has these rights</p>	<p>2 All children have these rights</p>	<p>3 Adults must do what's best for me</p>	<p>4 The Government should make sure my rights are respected</p>	<p>5 The Government should respect the right of my family to help me know about my rights</p>
<p>7 I have a right to a name and to belong to a country</p>	<p>8 I have a right to an identity</p>	<p>9 I have a right to live with a family who cares for me</p>	<p>10 I have the right to see my family if they live in another country</p>	<p>11 I have the right not to be taken out of the country illegally</p>
<p>13 I have the right to find out and share information</p>	<p>14 I have the right to have my own thoughts and beliefs and to choose my religion, with my parents' guidance</p>	<p>15 I have the right to meet with friends and to join groups</p>	<p>16 I have the right to keep some things private</p>	<p>17 I have the right to get information in lots of ways, so long as it's safe</p>
<p>19 I have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated</p>	<p>20 I have the right to special protection and help if I can't live with my own family</p>	<p>21 I have the right to have the best care if I am adopted</p>	<p>22 If I am a refugee, I have the same rights as children born in that country</p>	<p>23 If I have a disability, I have the right to special care and education</p>
<p>25 If I am not living with my family, people should keep checking I am safe and happy</p>	<p>26 My family should get the money they need to help bring me up</p>	<p>27 I have the right to have a proper house, food and clothing</p>	<p>28 I have the right to an education</p>	<p>29 I have the right to an education which develops personality, respect for rights and the environment</p>