

Pathways School

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy

Policy Monitoring

Date of last review: November 2024

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Date of next review: November 2025

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedures.

¹ The Governors of Pathways School are the trustees of Positive Behaviour Support for Learning (registered charity no.1186125)

1. Introduction

Pathways School believes that the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of students needs to be embedded throughout all learning opportunities and every aspect of school life.

2. Links to other school policies and practices.

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy

3. Our Vision

At Pathways School, we have a vision to make life fundamentally better for children and young people with autism, for their families and carers.

We believe every individual has the potential to learn and should be free of behaviours and activities that cause injury, pain, stress, or limit opportunities to access learning and community involvement.

We believe that the link between home, school and external support networks are crucial to fully support the overall development of a learner.

All our work is underpinned by the belief that every student is a unique individual with the potential to learn and thrive. We believe in constantly evolving our teaching and support systems to suit the needs of our students.

Our Values are simple. Pathways School has 3 values that underpin all that we do:

- **Happiness**
- **Friendship**
- **Independence**

We will do this through:

- Consistently high expectations and achievements for every individual.
- High quality, inspirational and innovative teaching and learning.
- A safe, secure, caring and enjoyable environment in which to work, learn, thrive and grow towards independence.
- Inspirational and accountable leadership at all levels.
- A personalised curriculum fit for the 21st century.

4. Fundamental British Values

At Pathways School, we aim to ensure that our school ethos, curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning reflect and promote British values as defined by the Government in the 2011 Prevent Strategy. We promote 'British Values' through our spiritual, moral, social and cultural education which permeates through the school's curriculum and supports the development of the 'whole child'. We recognise

that such development is most successful when those values and attitudes are promoted by all the staff and provide a model of behaviour for our students. By ensuring that we actively promote and reinforce British Values, Pathways School will help to prepare students for the diverse and dynamic community in which they will live and work.

The five British Values are:

4.1 Democracy

- The ability to understand and communicate are the most important areas of learning. We ensure that students are given a 'voice' to communicate. This 'voice' could be using words, objects, photographs, pictures, symbols, touch cues, eye pointing or body language.
- We empower our students by giving them opportunities to make choices about the things that they believe to be important. By valuing each 'voice' and by listening and responding to that voice we demonstrate that we support democracy and liberty.

4.2 The Rule of Law

- We have clear expectations regarding codes of behaviour, we help students to make decisions and choices that are acceptable to the school community and society at large.
- Whenever and wherever possible students are helped to learn to manage their behaviour and take responsibility for their actions. Staff are committed to providing a consistent and predictable environment within the school and beyond. We can help some students to understand the connection between actions and consequences. This type of environment enables students to feel safe and secure; this in turn, promotes the optimum conditions for learning to take place.

4.3 Individual Liberty

- Students are encouraged to become good and valued citizens. We do this by supporting each student to become as independent as possible. We endeavour to demonstrate that everyone has rights; this includes the right to say 'Yes' or 'No' to ideas or activities. Some students will be able to take responsibility for particular roles and to understand that with certain rights comes a level of responsibility.
- Learning to do things independently is an important part of learning to understand yourself. We support others by participating in charitable events throughout the year. We believe that engendering a caring and helpful environment and to be independent can boost and nurture a healthy self-esteem.

4.4 Mutual Respect

- We promote each student's inclusion in activities, settings and locations that are appropriate to them individually to meet their needs. Within school,

students work with a range of people, and interactions with others are always positively promoted on a personalised basis for each individual.

- The curriculum is personalised and planned for students and may include transitioning within the range of resources and places on the site and going into the community to meet with a range of people in a variety of situations which include: sports events, community events and shared participation with other schools/colleges.
- We believe it is important to facilitate opportunities to be part of the community as the students, families and staff have much to offer in the development of community cohesion.

4.5 Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

- We are part of a school and local community where each person is respected and valued equally regardless of ability, gender, faith, heritage or race.
- Cultural appreciation and development forms part of our curriculum. We place great emphasis on providing encounters and participation in events and celebrations to broaden all students' experiences and awareness of others.
- Our assemblies and special events help all students to find out about themselves and others linking their lives to the communities in which they belong. The themes cover areas such as: friendships, helping others and celebrations from a range of faiths and world events.
- Students are encouraged to experience British Culture through our curriculum themes. As a school, we take part in sporting activities which helps to instil 'fair play' and engender a 'team spirit'.
- Although some of our students may find it difficult to articulate their feelings and concerns; staff are attuned to changes in demeanour and well-being that may indicate anxiety. If they are concerned about a student our accepted practice links to the Safeguarding Policy which entrusts a duty of care to all staff to actively protect and promote the welfare of students.
- The staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that the students at our school are happy, well cared for and enabled to learn the skills they need to live a fulfilling life as part of their community.

5. Planning

In planning lessons, teachers are aware of the need to plan opportunities to develop a wide variety of spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs. A vast majority will be delivered through cross curricular activities as well as specific Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and class-based activities. All of which help develop our students 'Cultural capital' in order to enable them to participate in society to the best of their ability.

6. Spiritual Development

Students' spiritual development is shown by their:

- beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life & their interest in and respect for different people's feelings & 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.

Planned opportunities for spiritual development in all subjects can be seen across the school. Students 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

The school promotes an ethos within which all students can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected; accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals. These can occur during any part of the school day, e.g. when listening to music, decision and choice making, exercising empathy or creativity, how we live, contemplating the future, etc.

7. Moral Development

Students' moral development is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives;
- understanding of the consequences of their actions.
- interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues.

At Pathways School we believe that a morally aware student will develop a wide range of skills. These can include the following:

- Form judgements about 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.

Pathways School develops student moral development by:

- Providing a 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 students 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 students 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 students 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.

All staff have an instilled awareness of the code of conduct for all areas of the schools and the wider community based on the values held by Pathways and by the Governors of Positive Behaviour Support for Learning. We teach the students to be aware of their own actions, take responsibility for their own bodies and encourage independence. We will help the students to identify their feelings and think these through so that they are expressed in behaviour that is socially acceptable. This is done throughout the day, within 1:1 sessions, group lessons and with staff across the multi-disciplinary team. We are interested in the development of the whole child and will endeavour to raise their self-esteem through praise and other forms of reinforcement that highlight both academic and social achievements.

8. Social Development

Students' social development is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with students from different religious, ethnic and socio- economic backgrounds.
- willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively.
- interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.

At Pathways School we recognise that students 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 own 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.

Pathways School develops student 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 students to work co-operatively.
- Encouraging students to recognise and respect social differences and similarities.
- Providing positive experiences to reinforce our values as a school community – for example, through assemblies, café, residential experiences, school productions.
- Helping students 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, the whole school council.
- Providing opportunities for students to exercise leadership and responsibility.
- Providing positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community.

9. Cultural Development

Students' cultural development is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage.
- willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities.
- interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Students are made aware of the diversity of other cultures both within modern Britain and throughout the world. This is done through music, PE, art and many other curriculum areas.

Students 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.

Pathways School develops students' cultural development by:

- Extending students' 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 students to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encouraging students to reflect on their significance.
- Reinforcing the schools' cultural links through displays, posters, exhibitions, etc. As well as developing partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend students' cultural awareness, for example, theatre, museum and gallery visits.

10. Student Voice

The term 'Student Voice' describes how students give their input to what happens within the school and classroom. Student Voice is an ambition and a right for all our students, we want to empower appropriate and meaningful choice, listen to opinions and allow students to guide us in making decisions. Our desire is for students to know that their expertise, opinions and ideas are valued in all aspects of school life. Student Voice permeates all levels of our work together, from students participating in small group classroom conversations to students establishing procedures, events and contributing to the overarching ethos of the school.

Many students at Pathways School are in the process of developing the early stages of language. However, ensuring the students at Pathways School have a voice is important to us. Pathways hosts annual Careers events for students, allowing them the opportunity to meet with outside providers and learn more about what is available to them in their local area. Additionally, students have the opportunity to meet with an impartial careers advisor, with support from their families to talk about different destinations and next steps.

Language development runs through the whole curriculum at Pathways School, and ensuring students have the opportunity to learn to request items through new experiences. This is important in developing our students' voices. Some students are able to develop their own timetable and schedules, choosing certain activities and decide when they want to do them. Some students engage in 'Activity Schedules', empowering them to be able to change from one independent activity to another. This is particularly important when students may be at home for long periods, for instance the Summer and Spring holidays.

It is important that we listen and analyse the student's way of communicating (often challenging or maladaptive behaviours) and work out what they are trying to say and what they mean from repeated observations. We then teach the students new ways to get their feelings across and their voices heard in a way that is more appropriate way.

The expectation is to see student voice being used throughout the school day. In lessons, opinions are being gathered, programmes enhance communication skills, choices and comments are being recorded and displayed. Instead of a School Council with elected members, we have a whole school democratic stance, whereby all students are automatically empowered to make decisions.

11. How we promote SMSC at Pathways School

Spiritual Development	Moral Development	Social Development	Cultural Development
Whole school celebrations of different religious beliefs Assemblies Themed weeks Special Events	Behaviour policy Assemblies School ethos Charitable projects Community participation	ABA curriculum programme PSHE curriculum Assemblies ASDAN Themed weeks Special Events Community participation	Themed weeks Special Events Assemblies Access to the Arts School Trips Community participation

How we evidence SMSC

Spiritual Development	Moral Development	Social Development	Cultural Development
Whole school assemblies Religious based special events	Behaviour plans and data Assemblies Age-appropriate responsibilities Charitable activities Work experience Making a positive contribution to school life	Song Club School Productions Work experience Community visits restaurants, local gym, supermarkets, ski centre, swimming pool Buddy system for breaktime and lunch time School trips and visits Sports Day	Black History Week Art curriculum Song Club Assemblies Visits to art galleries, museums and libraries Theatre visits Work experience Class activities celebrating national events, such as Royal events.

The Impact on Students

Spiritual Development	Moral Development	Social Development	Cultural Development
<p>Students will develop better self-esteem and confidence; Students will get to experience different cultures, religions and types of backgrounds; Gain a better understanding of different types of beliefs.</p>	<p>Students will be able to access more activities in the local community and with their families; Students will be able to make choices and decisions based on an understanding of right and wrong; Students will be able to keep themselves safe when at home and in the community.</p>	<p>Social Acceptance; More positive interactions with adults and peers including family. Increased social circle; Students will develop their own voice. Students will be able to make their own choices and access their own interests. Develop new interests and choices; Gain a better understanding of others</p>	<p>New experiences through the learning of other cultures; Wider interests and understanding of others and their back grounds; Understand what it means to be part of a community, including local, national and international.</p>