



SMSC Policy

Mount St Mary's Catholic High School SMSC Policy

Adopted by Mount St Marys' Governing Body on 1 July 2023

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire E. P.', is written over a faint horizontal line.

Chair of Governors

Review date: 1 July 2026

At Mount St Mary's Catholic High School, we want our students to be successful, confident learners and responsible citizens. Guided by our Catholic values, we are committed to providing an environment that:

- Enables students to learn and develop to their full potential.
- Ensures respect, forgiveness, empathy for others and acceptance of differences
- Encourages independence, resilience, cooperation and collaborative working
- Ensures students develop self-discipline and take responsibility for their actions.
- Enables students to live our motto 'Quid Retribuam' (how do we repay the Lord) which embodies our Catholic values.

In order to facilitate and achieve this, we will provide a curriculum that:

- Is thoroughly planned, thoughtfully sequenced, differentiated and ambitious.
- Engages, excites and is meaningful and rigorous
- Stimulates questioning and challenge
- Is aspirational, creative, flexible and responsive
- Prioritises spiritual, moral, social, cultural intellectual and physical development
- Educates our students for today and life beyond Mount St Mary's.

We recognise the importance of the academic, personal development and well-being of every child in our school. This includes recognising the importance of providing a range of opportunities for our students to respond to, that supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with an understanding and an overview of teaching the Equality Act (2010) and including global education themes.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) (whilst each dimension is outlined separately there is a great deal of overlap between the four areas).

Spiritual development:

Spiritual development is concerned with developing the non-material aspects of life, focusing on personal insight, values, meaning and purpose. Beliefs that help provide perspective on life may be rooted in a religion, but equally may not. Students explore the fundamental British Values, respecting the values and beliefs of others. The Spiritual development of all our students is addressed through the Catholic vision and values of the school. As a faith school we address spiritual development through prayer, acts of daily collective worship, celebration of Catholic festivals, liturgies, RE and across the wider curriculum, along with acknowledging and celebrating the religious festivals of our diverse community.

We are committed to:

- Celebrating the religious and non-religious beliefs and values that our students bring as part of their family/culture heritage and to building an awareness of and respect for others' spiritual and religious beliefs
- Fostering common human values and building spiritual capacities to promote self-worth
- Self-esteem and valuing others
- Helping our students to come to an understanding of themselves as unique individuals and encouraging them to reflect and respond on how they fit into wider society.

- Developing our students' curiosity, imagination, creativity and promoting a lifelong love of learning.

Moral development

Moral development is how we teach to know what is right and wrong and acting on it accordingly. Moral development focuses on personal and societal values, understanding the reasons for them and airing and understanding disagreements. This is embedded throughout the school community through our behaviour policy and giving students time to 'fix it'. Data is shared on a weekly basis with students who, with guidance from their form tutor, have the opportunity to reflect and respond on the previous week's performance and decide positive actions for improvement.

We are committed to:

- Be truthful and honest
- Fostering positive Attitudes to Learning
- Respect the rights and property of others, their opinions and customs, even when they are different from our own
- Helping and putting others first and demonstrating 'Quid Pro Quo'
- Solve differences of opinion in non-violent ways using the principles of safe discussion and debate as well as restorative practice if and when needed.

Social development

Social development encourages students to work together effectively, relate to adults and participate in the local, national and global communities. It also includes the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs We are committed to:

- Ensuring students enhance and develop respect for others and their surroundings.
- Fostering the skill and qualities of team building through the development of self-confidence, cooperation, sensitivity to others, reliability, initiative and understanding
- Providing an environment where students can take responsibility for themselves and others in school and the wider society.
- Supporting local charities through our Retribuam work.
- Teaching the Equalities Act and protected characteristics throughout our ASPIRE curriculum.
- Getting our students ready for a Globalised world beyond Mount St. Mary's

Cultural development

Cultural development allows students to understand and feel comfortable in a variety of cultures and experiencing a range of cultural activities, be they art, theatre, travel, concerts, cultural spotlight / language. Students develop the fundamental British Value of exploring, understanding and tolerance regarding the diversity of cultural traditions and beliefs of others. Mount St. Mary's has a diverse community of different cultures and spoken languages. Consequently we consider it essential that we value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our school, our society and the world by:

- Promoting an appreciation of our many cultural tradition/s that make up Mount St. Mary's encouraging an appreciation of other cultural traditions.
- Celebrating the richness of culture and tradition.

- Weaving global education themes through our curriculum.

Teaching and Learning in SMSC at Mount St. Mary's Catholic High School.

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

- Recognising the importance of collective worship in supporting and encouraging SMSC development.
- Teaching of the Equalities Act 2010, protected characteristics and aspects of global education.
- Providing provision for introducing and teaching aspects of SMSC through our ASPIRE curriculum using a range of resources.
- Providing a SMSC statement across our subject areas detailing the curriculum intent for these and related areas. This 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 students to reflect on and respond to the issues of SMSC importance and concern.
- Encouraging teachers to plan for and respond to opportunities to enhance and develop SMSC to ensure curriculum leaders have evidence of provision for SMSC education in their subject and maintain a positive climate in school in which all are valued, respected and expected to make a positive contribution to the culture, ethos and environment in which we work.
- Reviewing the effectiveness and impact of our policy and practice as part of our cycle of school improvement.

Fundamental British Values

At Mount St. Mary's Catholic High School we recognise not only the importance of supporting students in their academic progress, but we also embrace our wider role in preparing them for adult life beyond the school curriculum – ensuring that they are 'work ready'. Part of our responsibility in that preparation is the promotion and reinforcement of British Values to our students.

We strive to promote and secure British values throughout our curriculum and ethos. This statement demonstrates our commitment not only to promoting British Values, but also celebrating and embracing them. We have a clear and rigorous expectation on all students and staff to promote the fundamental British Values of:

- Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

At Mount St Mary's Catholic High School these values are strongly linked with our whole school approach of embracing, respecting and celebrating the nature of our diverse community.

The British Values are promoted throughout our curriculum through subject specific content of the courses that our students follow, but also through our ASPIRE curriculum (PSHCE curriculum - Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education). Beyond the course content of our academic subjects, there are examples of what we do in school to promote these values:

Democracy

At Mount St Mary's the principle of democracy is consistently reinforced, with the democratic process being employed for important decisions within the school community, for instance, elections being held for student leadership, for example Head Boy and Girl. The principle of citizenship and democracy is explored in History, Religious Studies and Citizenship, as well as in tutor time and assemblies. Student Councils meet regularly and have been consulted on key whole school issues such as our behaviour management system, rewards and consequences, change in our lesson timings and our ASPIRE curriculum.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout regular school days, as well as when dealing with behaviour and through school assemblies. Students are taught the values and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from external partners such as the Police and Fire Service, together with organisations such as Road Safety, Cyber Security, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Prevent Project are embedded within our school calendar and help reinforce this message. Our work with St Giles charity helps to deliver assemblies to complement topics from the PSHCE curriculum such as drug and alcohol misuse. Our Safer Schools Police Officer regularly meets with students and parents to support the education of all regarding the laws and the consequences if these are not adhered to.

Individual liberty

Within our community, students are actively encouraged to make independent choices knowing that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights, responsibilities and personal freedoms and receive advice about how to exercise these safely, for example through our exploration of Online Safety PSHCE and tutor time activities.

Mutual Respect

Respect is at the core of our school ethos and is modelled by students and staff alike. The school promotes respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning environments. In line with our commitment to democracy, students at Mount St. Mary's Catholic High School are always able to voice their opinions and we foster an environment where students are safe to disagree with each other. Mutual respect is embraced throughout the curriculum. From the concept of 'fair play' in PE and in all aspects of school discussions to the student mentoring programme which promotes mutual respect and support between students across different year groups. We operate a restorative behaviour system with the emphasis on how to 'fix it', encouraging students to reflect on their actions and supporting them with positive choices moving forwards; this key message is reinforced to both staff and students alike as part of a shared responsibility.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

This is achieved through equipping students with the ability to understand their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity within the school community. We also run activities that enrich our student experience throughout the academic year

from which our students gain valuable insight and understanding of other cultures and languages. Additionally, students are actively encouraged to share their faith and beliefs within the school. Our Religious Studies curriculum provides a broad and balanced education on a range of faiths, religions and cultures.