



THE MULBERRY HOUSE SCHOOL

All Mulberry House School Policies are always to be read and considered in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Inclusion Policies

Guidance for CHILDREN'S SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (SMSC) including a Statement on British Values

This Policy of The Mulberry House School applies to all sections of the school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy has been written in line with the DfE guidance: The Independent Schools Standards: guidance for Independent Schools 2019.

A Policy Statement

Encompassing Personal, Social & Emotional Development (P.S.E.D.) in the Foundation Stage and Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education (P.S.H.E.E) for the National Curriculum

Aims

Our approach to PSHEE and SMSC reflects the schools aims and ethos in which each child develops self-confidence, self-esteem and a love of learning. We strive to ensure that each child's full academic potential is realised while their individual talents are nurtured. The SMSC development of children is integral to the overall safeguarding culture of the whole school, the attitudes and beliefs our school community have directly impact if our children feel safe to express themselves freely.

Introduction

Children's SMSC development is fostered and promoted through all aspects of the school's provision – indeed it permeates every facet of the fabric, which can be considered to be the life and work of The Mulberry House School. Not only is it about the acquisition of knowledge, concepts skills and attitudes for individual children, it is also about relationships, the values, aims and ethos which the school considers to be important and how it sets out to achieve these.

For this policy we have drawn upon the guidance issued by the Independent Schools Regulations. This includes recognising the importance of providing a range of opportunities for our pupils to engage in and explore, that supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments with an understanding and an overview of the Every Child Matters agenda.

Planning

In planning lessons, teachers are aware of the need to plan opportunities to develop a wide variety of spiritual, moral and cultural needs. A vast majority will be delivered through core



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curriculum subjects, cross-curricular activities as well as specific PSED, PSHE, RE and 'Circle Time' activities. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that children access only credible information online, as set out in the KCSIE 2025 updates. Teachers must acknowledge the safeguarding risks posed by misinformation and conspiracy theories and work to support the children in critical thinking, media literacy, and digital citizenship. Though our children are heavily supervised and a strong filtering and monitoring system is in place to protect our school community, teachers are expected to be aware of false information online and are responsible for recording any potential risks as per the e-safety policy. In alignment with new RSHE content teachers must ensure respectful, lawful handling of identity topics.

Children's Spiritual Development

We recognise our duty to prepare our children for life in modern Britain and to keep them safe.

Working in partnership with parents we promote a culture of tolerance and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles. Through allowing pupils to learn about religious celebrations, Cultural Diversity and Black History month. This relates to the aspect of inner life through which children acquire insights into their personal existence, which are of enduring worth. It is characterised by reflecting, discovering the self, the attribution of meaning, to experience and valuing a non-material dimension to life.

At The Mulberry House School we aim to give children opportunities to:

- ◆ Develop skills and attitudes, which will enable them to recognise and respond to areas of experience which lie beyond the immediate and obvious.
- ◆ Express personal beliefs and compare views with others, sharing feelings and opinions through cultural days, group discussions and stories.
- ◆ Develop their own system of beliefs, which may or may not include religious beliefs.
- ◆ Discuss their beliefs and show what they believe by their behaviour both in formal and informal settings.
- ◆ Reflect upon deep, ultimate questions and relate them to their own experience and look for meaning in their experience.
- ◆ Promoting learning opportunities which value children's questions and gives them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- ◆ Experience a love of learning through rewarding their enthusiasm and by encouraging participation in their own learning.
- ◆ Reflect upon the world around them and show a sense of awe and wonder towards aspects of the natural world or human achievement.
- ◆ Reflect on the situations of others through role-play, stories, project work and informal settings.



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- ◆ We believe that children can best be encouraged to develop spiritually by providing a learning environment which nurtures self-respect and encourages questioning, curiosity, discussion, independent thought, and self-reliance. This should allow children to develop their own beliefs while valuing the beliefs and cultures of others acknowledging the rights of others to hold different ideas.
- ◆ We wish to encourage an approach to teaching and learning that aims to look beyond the superficial obvious and material to the underlying belief systems and life styles which have inspired and directed people in the past and continue to direct their lives today.
- ◆ We would wish children to experience moments of silence and reflection. Children can experience thought, imagination, intuition and inspiration – that side of human nature, which cannot be explained intellectually. This more spiritual side can be developed through the meditation sessions each day, as well as the creative arts including story, music, art, drama and dance.

Children's Moral Development

This relates to children's knowledge, understanding, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is right and wrong.

We believe that The Mulberry House School should provide opportunities for children to develop:

- ◆ A sense of right and wrong.
- ◆ Respect for ourselves, other people and their property.
- ◆ Respect for the truth.
- ◆ Respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self- confidence;
- ◆ enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- ◆ provide pupils with an understanding of law of the land and religious law.
- ◆ encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour
- ◆ show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which our school is located geographically and more widely; meaning beyond the school community, working with the local area.
- ◆ enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- ◆ further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;



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- ◆ encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act;
- ◆ encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England;
- ◆ an understanding that their actions may affect others as well as themselves.
- ◆ The ability to discuss and reflect upon moral issues and make decisions and judgements guided by their own values and principles.
- ◆ An understanding that their values and attitudes may have to change over time.
- ◆ The ability to behave consistently in a way that demonstrates their acceptance of our school mission statement and the Mulberry House Way.
- ◆ To provide an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practice making moral decisions.

At Mulberry House School we value and actively promote:

- ◆ Honesty
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Respect for the rights and property of others
- ◆ Consideration towards others
- ◆ Help for those less fortunate than ourselves
- ◆ People taking responsibility for their own actions
- ◆ Self-control
- ◆ Politeness and good manners
- ◆ Respect for other people's life choices with regard to those with protected characteristics
- ◆ British Values

Moral development in school builds upon the child's experience in the home and we ensure that children are given positive encouragement and praise when deserved and constructive criticism when appropriate to maintain Mulberry House codes, conventions and code of behaviour.

Children's Social Development

This relates to children's progressive acquisition of the competences and qualities needed to play a full and constructive part in British society.

Mulberry House communicates its values not only to the children but also to the parents through the school prospectus and via meetings with the Headteacher and staff. The Mulberry House Way is displayed in prominent places in both buildings.



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The daily contact the staff have with the children in the classroom and throughout the school communicates the sense of care and social responsibility which is at the heart of the work at Mulberry House School.

Children are given opportunities to:

- ◆ Take responsibilities and display leadership through daily routines where children deliver messages, undertake classroom jobs and older children act as monitors.
- ◆ Co-operate with others through sharing of resources, group work, playing games and music time.
- ◆ Meet with members of the local community, e.g. community police officer, authors, artists, religious leaders and other professionals.
- ◆ Teachers endeavour through respectful relationships to develop a sense of self-worth and a realisation that what they do matters not only in school but also in the wider world.
- ◆ Local visits and trips in the local community give children real experiences which enables them to gain insight and understanding of our society.
- ◆ The relationships which the children see adults having are powerful models for them. Staff see the importance of being friendly and civil to each other in front of the children, to parents or to any visitors to the school.
- ◆ The school administrator and secretary also have a key role in their dealing both with children and with visitors to the school. This applies to other members of the Mulberry team – cooks, lunchtime staff caretaker and teachers.

Children's Cultural Development

This relates to children's increasing understanding and awareness of those beliefs, values, customs and knowledge which collectively form the basis of identity and cohesion amongst groups and societies.

The staff at Mulberry House School are well aware of the role they have to play in exposing their pupils to the best experiences available in the field of music, dance, drama and art. We would also regard ourselves as having a key role in the deepening of the pupils' appreciation of these important aspects of our lives.

At Mulberry House children will be taught to appreciate and develop their own and other cultures through:

- ◆ The use of books, and audio and visual stories portraying a variety of cultures.
- ◆ Our programme of visits to museums, galleries, theatres etc.
- ◆ Encouraging visits and visitors, including parents and grandparents.
- ◆ Our displays around school reflecting the school's cultural diversity and its interest in culture as a whole. We ensure the environment of the classroom reflects an interest in the arts. Displays are of primary importance and children's attention is drawn to them and they are talked about.



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- ◆ Learning about Black History Month
- ◆ Experiencing music and instruments from around the world and learning songs in different languages and traditional dances. We use the children as a resource to develop this awareness.
- ◆ Learning about festivals around the world and how they are celebrated and looking at religious artefacts.
- ◆ Cooking multicultural recipes.
- ◆ Learning about the history and current politics of this and other countries.
- ◆ Assemblies in which children are exposed to music, poetry, song, dance and drama from a range of eras and cultures.
- ◆ Morning and afternoon registers conducted in a variety of languages.

Conclusion

We are aware of the messages which children are given by the ethos of the school and we aim to provide an environment which is stimulating, non-stereotypical, and multi-cultural and in which children and their work is valued.

Learning about ourselves and about others is of fundamental and significant importance. At Mulberry House we aim to promote the best relationship possible and hope that such a foundation helps build happy personal lives and a humane and caring society.

PROMOTION OF BRITISH VALUES STATEMENT

We ensure that through our school vision, values, rules, curriculum and teaching we promote tolerance and respect for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles. We recognise our duty to prepare our children for life in modern Britain and to keep them safe.

Working in partnership with parents we promote a culture of tolerance and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles. Together our words, actions and behaviour influence children within the school and in the community. As a school we value the diverse ethnic backgrounds of all pupils and families and undertake a variety of events and lessons to celebrate these. We have found this approach to be enriching for all stakeholders as it teaches tolerance and respect for the differences in our community and the wider world. Underpinning all this, are a range of curriculum topics which have strong links to British Society.

General overview:

Each year we celebrate an array of world events and multi-cultural events. For example, we hold an annual assembly on Remembrance Day, commemorations where children purchase poppies and reflect on sacrifices made for our liberty. Some examples of events and festivals that we have celebrated in recent years include the World Cup, the Olympics and



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Para Olympics, May day, Harvest, Christmas, Diwali, Eid, Hanukah and Black History Month. In recent years, we have held whole school celebration weeks and days such as International Cultural week, Asian Arts and Culture Week, British History Week and Africa Day, all of which allowed for parental involvement. On a general level, the school undertakes circle times and assemblies which uphold the key values of the Mulberry Mindset; for example, empathy, respect and resilience. These are also taught within formal SEAL, PSHEE, PSED, Citizenship and RE lessons and on an informal nature throughout the school days. They are embedded in the curriculum and planning across the school.

Democracy:

Democracy is clearly evident within our school. Pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard through our democratically elected School Council and pupil questionnaires. We instil a sense of personal and social responsibility in each child by encouraging them to take ownership over their own learning and progress. The children in Prep III act as; lunchtime monitors, reading buddies and playground monitors, helping the younger children.

Parents' opinions are welcomed through methods such as questionnaires, parents' meetings, and our open-door policy.

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, and are embedded in behaviour systems and through school assemblies. From entry to the school at age 2, children are taught the value and reasons behind rules and laws. As children get older it is explained that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves, and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from authorities such as the Police, paramedics and Fire Service are regular parts of our calendar and help reinforce this message. The concept of the Rule of Law is also reinforced through teaching activities in our citizenship curriculum. The children actively follow The Mulberry House Way. We ensure that school rules and expectations are clear and fair and our pupils understand that rules are there to protect us just as living under the rule of law protects all individuals.

Individual Liberty:

Within school, children are actively encouraged to make choices and express their opinions, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. This enables them to develop their character and self-belief. We model freedom of speech through pupil participation in class in the context of a safe, fair and supportive learning environment. We discuss and challenge stereotypes and implement a strong anti-bullying culture, supported by our Kindness Council and buddy system.



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The children are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely. Examples of this are through E-Safety, Philosophy and PSHE lessons. Through daily lessons, of participation in extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, pupils are given the freedom to make choices.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs:

We promote mutual respect as a central part of our school ethos. We are very lucky to have a diverse school community encompassing different languages, backgrounds and faiths. Children are encouraged to respect themselves and to respect individual differences. This is put into practice in the classroom, around school, in the playground and throughout our curriculum. We expect interactions between all children, parents and teachers to be in a courteous and respectful manner. Our Philosophy and Debate sessions encourage pupils to respect the views and beliefs of others. Our RE curriculum provides a broad and balanced education on a range of faiths, religions and cultures. The children have a variety of opportunities to discuss their faith, what religion is and develop a secure understanding that each person is entitled to their own religion (including the right to have no religion). All our conduct influences the children, therefore it is imperative that children understand what this means and how it is shown. These ideas are reiterated through modelling.