

Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) Policy

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Issue Number	006	Author	James Madine
School	Unity College	Approver	Jo Sharpe
Headteacher	Louise Reeks	Regional Executive Headteacher/ Regional Director	Kate Martin

1. Introduction

Keys Group is committed to creating safe, nurturing, and inclusive environments where every pupil can thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. Our pupils, many of whom have experienced exclusion from mainstream education due to complex needs, challenging behaviours, or trauma, benefit from a bespoke approach that fosters their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

We recognise that many pupils arrive with unmet basic needs and a history of instability. Unity College provides stability, care, and a sense of belonging, enabling pupils to develop self-confidence, resilience, and a positive sense of identity within a supportive community.

Our approach is underpinned by respect for all faiths, beliefs, and cultures, aligned with British values and the principles of equality and inclusion.

Our young people all reside within care homes. They often have poor life and school experiences that may have resulted in a disbelief in education/social system, fear of failure, missed learning of extensive periods of time, rejection, anxiety for learning, unidentified needs and provision, lack of education-belonging, isolated friendship groups and inadequate life goals/aspirations.

2. Aim and Scope

This policy aims to:-

- Promote the holistic development of pupils through SMSC education tailored to their individual needs.
- Ensure pupils develop self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence.
- Encourage pupils to understand and respect the civil and criminal law of England and Wales.
- Support pupils in taking responsibility for their behaviour and contributing positively to their communities.
- Foster respect for diversity, democracy, and cultural traditions.
- Prepare pupils for adulthood by equipping them with social skills, moral understanding, and cultural awareness.

- Prepare pupils for adulthood by equipping them with citizenship skills, community participation opportunities, and social competencies essential for independent and responsible living.

Through a unity of teamwork, we build a caring and collaborative community that is sensitive to individual experiences and needs yet embraces aspirational achievement through; nurture, identification of gaps in need and learning, goal setting, learning knowledge and skills and by practising these skills. The aims are to set high expectations for achievement to enable a pathway of success that will encompass a fulfilled and enriched life beyond Unity College.

This policy supports compliance with ISS Part 2, which relates to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils.

3. Definition of SMSC

Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Education (SMSC) at Unity College is integral to our curriculum and daily practice. It helps pupils develop values, empathy, and the ability to engage positively with others. SMSC is embedded in:

- The curriculum and lesson planning.
- The school ethos and relationships.
- Tutor times, and enrichment activities
- Positive behaviour support and restorative practice.
- Community involvement and special events.

4. Implementation

4.1 Curriculum Integration

- SMSC themes are incorporated across subjects, with resources carefully curated to align with our values.
- Student profiles include SMSC and PIES targets tailored to each pupil's needs.

4.2 School Ethos and Environment

- Staff model respectful, empathetic behaviours and foster a culture of inclusion.
- Positive relationships and restorative approaches support pupils' moral and social development.
- Restorative practice underpins our approach to behaviour support and moral development, helping pupils understand the impact of their actions, repair relationships, and develop social responsibility.

4.3 Tutor Time

- Tutor time includes reflection and discussion opportunities to reinforce SMSC themes.

- Speak freely debates take place during tutor time. This is where students can freely share their thoughts and ideas to allow staff to educate misconceptions in an informal manner. Speak freely debates are created to allow exploration of moral and ethical issues, consider protected characteristics and embed a greater understanding of British values.
- Weekly safeguarding topics are embedded through speak freely debates and safeguarding student board – these aim to educate our students on different safeguarding topics to ensure they are well versed in identifying concerns and reporting them within and beyond school life

4.4 Enrichment and Community Engagement

- Pupils participate in vocational, extracurricular, and charitable activities that promote social responsibility.
- Schools maintain strong links with families, care homes, local authorities, and community organisations to support pupils' development.
- Our enrichment activities actively promote pupils' engagement with local communities, fostering a sense of belonging, responsibility, and citizenship.
- Our 'Making Memories' initiative is a distinctive feature of Keys Group, providing pupils with enriching experiences that foster SMSC development and create lasting positive memories.

4.5 Trauma-Informed SMSC Support

We recognise that many pupils have experienced trauma or exclusion which can impact their engagement with SMSC education. Staff are trained in trauma-informed approaches to create safe, nurturing spaces where pupils feel valued and supported to explore moral, social, and cultural themes at their own pace.

Restorative practises and personalised support plans are used to help pupils process experiences and develop positive social behaviours.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unity College maintains an SMSC tracker and folder documenting activities and opportunities offered.
- The SMSC folder is updated regularly and reviewed at least termly by senior leaders and regional managers.
- Monitoring ensures a balanced and comprehensive SMSC provision that meets pupils' diverse needs.
- Progress in SMSC learning is reviewed regularly with input from pupils, families, and staff to ensure personalised development.
- The SMSC tracker and folder is used as a key tool to track activities, pupil engagement, and impact.

6. Training and Staff Development

- SMSC policy and practice are included in staff induction.
- Ongoing training supports staff in delivering effective SMSC education tailored to pupils with complex needs.

7. Equality and Inclusion

Keys Group is committed to equality and diversity. SMSC provision respects and celebrates differences in race, faith, gender, disability, and sexual orientation. Any concerns related to discrimination or disadvantage are addressed promptly and sensitively.

Appendix A: Unity College Vision

