



RIPPLEVALE
SCHOOL

SMSC Policy

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Next Review Date: January 2026

Ripplevale School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the School's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, health and safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole School is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

Ripplevale School provides a caring learning environment where our students make meaningful progress, relative to their individual starting points. Our aim is to encourage them to develop appropriate personal, social and employable skills enabling them to become confident, independent and aspiring young people

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Ripplevale School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the School's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full- or part-time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- Educare (online CPD)

Ripplevale School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Ripplevale School.

The policy documents of Ripplevale School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in School separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

The policy has been largely written to reflect the:

- Inclusion of points drawn from The Independent Schools Standards
- Inclusion of points drawn from the self-review tool provided by the SMSCqualitymark.org.uk (Young Citizens)

1 Philosophy

At Ripplevale School (the School) we recognise the importance of constructing a firm foundation on which all aspects of education are built. It is our explicit aim to offer a good-quality education which enables students to interact positively with others, have a fully developed value system and play an informed and confident role in society. All staff work together to create a caring environment, in which students can learn and grow in a healthy, balanced way. It is our aim that Spiritual, Moral, Social and

Cultural education (SMSC) is embedded within the day to day operations of the School and that fundamental British values are actively promoted.

2 Curriculum aims

SMSC is an umbrella term that covers a number of different curriculum areas, specifically including PSHE (and its component sub-areas of relationships education (RE – for primary students) and relationships and sex education (RSE – for secondary students), careers, religious education (RE), citizenship and life skills. (It is potentially slightly confusing that there are two subjects with the abbreviation RE: but these are the commonly-used designations for these subjects. See the School's *PSHE Policy*, *RE (Relationships Education) Policy* and *RSE Policy* for more detail on these specific areas. SMSC also permeates all other subject areas, where there are constant opportunities for the embedding of SMSC elements and fundamental British values. In this broader, whole-School, whole-curriculum sense the SMSC policy aims to:

1. ensure that everyone connected with the School is aware of our values and principles
2. actively promote the fundamental British values of:
 - a. the rule of law
 - b. democracy
 - c. individual liberty
 - d. tolerance and mutual respect
3. ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of SMSC elements through the wider curriculum and the general life of the School
4. ensure that a child's education is set within a context that is meaningful and appropriate to their age, aptitude and background
5. ensure that children and young people know what is expected of them and why
6. give each child a range of opportunities to reflect upon and to discuss their beliefs, feelings and responses to personal experience
7. enable children and young people to develop an understanding of their individual and group identity
8. enable the development of an understanding of their social and cultural environment and an appreciation of the many cultures that now enrich our society
9. give each child the opportunity to explore social and moral issues and to develop a sense of social and moral responsibility
10. make and develop personal relationships, based on trust, self-esteem and mutual respect
11. help our students to become active, responsible citizens in a democratic society.

The School ethos, effective relationships throughout the School and curricular activities all make a significant contribution to the development of SMSC education. The National Curriculum, and particularly PSHE, RE, citizenship, and life skills, provide many opportunities to further SMSC education.

2.1 Teaching and learning

The various subjects and lessons that make up the School curriculum form one aspect of the School's SMSC provision. As a School we aim to provide teaching that:

1. actively promotes fundamental British values, challenging opinions and behaviors that are contrary to these
2. encourages open discussion of problems that arise from School and everyday life
3. provides sufficient periods of reflection to allow students to process alternative views and ask relevant questions based on their SEND needs
4. provides high quality lessons using effective teaching methods
5. considers the student needs when planning lesson content and activities
6. facilitates all students in the School having a voice
7. promotes mutual respect and tolerance
8. teaches values with regard to specific protected characteristics such as faith, religion and culture
9. uses opportunities to enrich learning such as local elections, outside speakers or trips enabling students to encounter people of different backgrounds
10. promote activities such as educational visits, and work-shadowing or work experience in relevant organisations, enhancing pupils' understanding
11. does not present information with a political purpose to further the interests of one political party, exploiting pupil's vulnerability
12. maintains teaching standards as set out in *The Independent Schools Standards* (Part One: Quality of Education).
13. promotes work and interactions within the school which respects individuals and difference
14. cultivates respect for diversity.

2.1.1 Spiritual development

Within the context of spiritual development, as a School we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable students to:

1. develop their self-esteem in their learning experience
2. develop their capacity for critical and independent thought
3. foster their emotional life and express their feelings
4. experience moments of stillness and reflection
5. discuss their beliefs, feelings, values and responses to personal experiences
6. form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships
7. reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life.

As a school for students with ASD diagnoses, it should be noted that some of these outcomes should be viewed within this context; that some students with ASD diagnoses may find, for example, the development of "their capacity for critical and independent thought" challenging. In such cases, it should be remembered that these "global" outcomes, taken from *The Independent School Standards* and other sources such as the Young Citizen's SMSC quality mark organisation, may need adapting to reflect the needs of students at the School.

2.1.2 Moral development

Within the context of moral development, as a School we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable students to:

1. recognise the unique value of each individual
2. recognise the challenge of religious teaching
3. listen and respond appropriately to the views of others

4. gain the confidence to cope with setbacks and learn from mistakes
5. take initiative and act responsibly with consideration of others
6. distinguish between right and wrong
7. show respect for the environment
8. make informed and independent judgements.

Again, these outcomes should be viewed with the context of the students' diagnoses.

2.1.3 Social development

Within the context of social development, as a School we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable students to:

1. develop an understanding of their individual and group identity
2. learn about service in the school and wider community
3. begin to understand the need for social justice and a concern for the disadvantaged
4. develop spiritual values and reasoned personal and moral values
5. consider the pluralistic nature of society; developing their understanding and respect for those with different religions, beliefs and ways of life
6. make and develop personal relationships, based on trust, self-esteem and mutual respect
7. develop an appreciation of human achievements and aspirations
8. develop an understanding of the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups, nations and the environment
9. encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour
10. promote a culture supportive to those with protected characteristics and prevent bullying related to protected characteristics, such as referenced in the Equality Act.

The School *Safeguarding Policy*, *Behaviour Policy* and *Anti-bullying policy* also provide a framework for staff and students to follow. Again, these outcomes should be viewed with the context of the students' diagnoses.

2.1.4 Cultural development

Within the context of cultural development, as a School we aim to provide learning opportunities that will enable students to:

1. recognise the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain, and how these influence individuals and society
2. develop an understanding of their social and cultural development
3. prepare students to interact positively with those from different faiths and cultures
4. develop a respect for their own and others' cultures and cultural traditions, thus encouraging tolerance and harmony.

Again, these outcomes should be viewed with the context of the students' diagnoses.

2.1.5 British values

Within the context of teaching fundamental British values, as a School we aim to provide learning opportunities that will:

- include in suitable parts of the curriculum - as appropriate for the age of pupils - material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain, in contrast to other forms of government in other countries

- ensure all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils
- use opportunities such as general or local elections to hold mock elections to promote fundamental British values and provide pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view
- consider the role of extra-curricular activity, including any run directly by pupils, in promoting fundamental British values
- develop an understanding of how citizens can influence decision making through the democratic process
- develop an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected by law
- have an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated and should not be a cause for prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- develop an understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination
- have an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individuals and is essential for their wellbeing and safety
- develop an understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence.

2.2 Curriculum development

Development in SMSC will take place across all curriculum areas. SMSC has particularly strong links to PSHE, RE and citizenship education. Within all curricular activities, students will be encouraged to reflect on the significance of what they are learning, to recognise any challenges to their own attitudes and lifestyle and to recognise a spiritual dimension. All curriculum areas should seek illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible.

Through classroom discussions we will give the students opportunities to:

1. talk about personal experiences and feelings
2. express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs
3. speak about difficult events, e.g. bullying, bereavement, etc.
4. share thoughts and feelings with other people
5. explore relationships with friends, family and others
6. consider the needs and behaviour of others
7. show empathy
8. develop self-esteem and a respect for others
9. develop a sense of belonging
10. develop the skills and attitudes that enable children and young people to develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally, e.g. empathy, respect, open mindedness, sensitivity, critical awareness, etc.
11. question and explore others' faiths, beliefs and views.

Again, these outcomes should be viewed with the context of the students' diagnoses.

2.2.1 Opportunities and associated skills

Many curriculum areas provide opportunities to:

1. listen and talk to each other

2. learn awareness of treating all as equals, accepting people who are different because of physical and learning difficulties
3. agree and disagree
4. experience good role models
5. take turns and share equipment
6. work cooperatively and collaboratively.

2.2.2 Activities

Practical activities to develop SMSC will include:

1. working together in different groupings and situations
2. encouraging the students to behave appropriately at meal times
3. taking responsibility, e.g. school council
4. encouraging teamwork in PE and games
5. appreciating and respecting the work and performance of other students, regardless of ability
6. engaging in cultural days
7. understanding people from different cultures and countries
8. participating in a variety of different educational visits
9. participating in live performances
10. using assembly themes to explore important aspects of our heritage and other cultures e.g., festival days, patron saints and global events
11. studying literature and arts from different cultures supported by visits from writers, artists and participating in workshops
12. opportunities for the students to hear and see live performances by professional actors, dancers and musicians
13. opportunities to make and evaluate food and dishes from other countries, including visits from guest chefs and cooks
14. studying the contributions to society that certain famous people have made.

3 Links with the wider community

The School recognises that an important component of effective SMSC provision is building links with the wider community. To this end:

1. visitors are welcomed into our School
2. visits to various religious places of worship are arranged to support the understanding of a wider religious communities
3. the School supports the work of a variety of charities
4. the development of strong home-school links is regarded as crucial, enabling parents and teachers to work in an effective partnership to support the students
5. students will be taught to appreciate and take responsibility for their local environment.

4 Monitoring and evaluation

Provision for SMSC is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. This is achieved by:

1. the planned monitoring of teaching and learning and scrutiny of work by PSHE/RE coordinators/SLT
2. regular discussions at staff meetings
3. the audit of policies and provision
4. PSHE/RE development and, when relevant, inclusion in the school development plan
5. sharing classroom work and best practice.

5 Inclusion

The aim of the School - enabling each student to reach their full potential - reflects our ethos of valuing individuality. We are committed to equality of opportunity, regardless of race, cultural background, gender, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We believe that all students have a right to experience a real environment in which they can learn that people are not all the same.