St Robert Bellarmine
Catholic Primary School

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Development Policy.

Our Mission Statement

"We are God's work of art."

- Help each other
- Be happy
- Follow the light of Jesus
- Include everybody
- Everybody do their best in every way
- Be friends with everyone
- Be responsible for your own actions
- Be Respectful
- Work to the best of your abilities
- Parents, teachers and children support each other.

Approved by: Governing Body

Date reviewed: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

1. Introduction

At St Robert Bellarmine Catholic Primary School, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of every pupil is at the heart of our Catholic mission and our approach to education.

Our mission, “We are God’s work of art,” reflects our belief that every person is created in the image and likeness of God and possesses inherent dignity and worth. We seek to enable every child to flourish spiritually, morally, socially, culturally, academically, emotionally and physically.

The school recognises its statutory responsibility to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral and cultural development. Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 requires a balanced and broadly based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

SMSC is not a separate subject. It is a whole-school responsibility which permeates our Catholic ethos, curriculum, Religious Education, prayer and liturgy, RSHE and PSHE, behaviour and relationships, pastoral provision, enrichment activities and everyday life of the school.

2. Aims

- develop knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and an awareness of God’s presence in their lives and the world;
- develop self-knowledge, self-esteem, confidence and a sense of personal identity;
- reflect on their experiences, beliefs, values and actions;
- develop a sense of awe, wonder, curiosity, imagination and creativity;
- recognise right and wrong and understand that actions have consequences;
- develop reasoned moral judgements informed by Gospel values;
- demonstrate respect, compassion, forgiveness, justice and responsibility;
- develop the social skills required to participate positively in school and wider society;
- appreciate and respect their own cultural heritage and the cultural diversity of modern Britain;
- understand and respect people whose faith, beliefs, cultures, families or backgrounds may be different from their own;
- actively engage with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- be prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.

3. What is SMSC?

Spiritual development concerns pupils’ beliefs, religious or otherwise; their understanding of themselves and others; their sense of meaning and purpose; their ability to reflect; and their appreciation of beauty, creativity, imagination, awe and wonder.

Moral development concerns pupils’ ability to recognise right and wrong, understand consequences, consider moral and ethical questions and develop reasoned views informed by their values and beliefs.

Social development concerns pupils’ ability to work and communicate effectively with others, participate in different communities, form healthy relationships, resolve disagreements appropriately and contribute positively to the common good.

Cultural development concerns pupils’ understanding and appreciation of their own cultural heritage and the diversity and richness of other cultures, traditions and communities within Britain and the wider world.

4. Spiritual Development

As a Catholic school, spiritual development is fundamental to our mission. It includes the development of each person’s response to God, the creator of all that is good, beautiful and true.

Pupils are encouraged to recognise themselves and others as unique and valued children of God. They are provided with opportunities to encounter God through Religious Education, Scripture, prayer and liturgy, the sacraments, reflection, service to others and engagement with creation.

- develop a sense of God's presence in their lives and reflect upon and respond to God's love;
- encounter the life, words and actions of Jesus and learn about Mary, the saints and other significant Christian witnesses;
- pray individually and collectively;
- develop awe, wonder, reverence, imagination and creativity;
- ask and explore questions about meaning, purpose, life and faith;
- reflect upon their experiences and beliefs;
- appreciate beauty in creation, art, music, literature and human relationships;
- learn how people of other religions and worldviews respond to the spiritual dimension of life.

5. Moral Development

Moral development helps pupils understand their responsibilities towards themselves, other people, their community and the wider world. The school's approach is rooted in the Gospel values of love, justice, forgiveness, compassion, truth and service.

- recognise the difference between right and wrong and understand consequences;
- take responsibility for their actions and understand forgiveness, reconciliation and making amends;
- consider motives, intentions, attitudes and moral and ethical questions;
- express and justify views appropriately and listen respectfully to views which differ from their own;
- understand the moral teaching of the Catholic Church at an age-appropriate level;
- consider local, national and global moral issues;
- develop respect for the law and understand why rules and laws are necessary;
- recognise injustice, prejudice, discrimination and harmful behaviour and know how to respond appropriately.
- Behaviour expectations, rewards and consequences are communicated clearly so that pupils understand the connection between choices, responsibility, consequences and reconciliation.

6. Social Development

Social development involves pupils learning to participate positively in families, friendships, school and the wider community. Catholic Social Teaching and the principle of the common good provide an important foundation for this work.

- form positive and respectful relationships and cooperate successfully with others;
- take turns, share, negotiate and resolve disagreements peacefully;
- develop leadership, responsibility and participation in pupil voice and democratic processes;
- contribute to the life of the school, parish and local community;
- undertake charitable action and service to others;
- understand how communities and institutions function;
- develop respect for people from different backgrounds;
- develop safe, respectful behaviour in face-to-face and online relationships.

7. Cultural Development

Cultural development enables pupils to understand their own cultural heritage while appreciating the richness and diversity of other cultures and traditions. Pupils learn that cultures develop and change over time and that individuals contribute to the cultural life of their communities.

- appreciate their own cultural and religious heritage and understand Britain's cultural heritage and contemporary diversity;
- experience literature, art, music, drama, dance, poetry and other forms of cultural expression;
- encounter a range of traditions, religions, worldviews and cultural experiences;
- recognise and challenge stereotypes and prejudice;
- understand how different cultures have influenced Britain and the wider world;
- participate in visits, performances, celebrations and cultural events;
- express themselves creatively and reflect upon the significance of cultural experiences.

8. Fundamental British Values

The school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

These values form part of pupils' SMSC development and preparation for life in modern Britain. At St Robert Bellarmine they are developed in ways consistent with our Catholic ethos, including through pupil voice and leadership, class and school responsibilities, understanding rules and consequences, respectful discussion and debate, Religious Education, RSHE/PSHE, the wider curriculum and engagement with the local community.

Pupils are taught that people may hold beliefs, values and opinions different from their own and that disagreement does not remove the requirement to treat others with dignity and respect.

9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

SMSC provision is inclusive and accessible to all pupils. The school promotes equality of opportunity and seeks to ensure that no pupil experiences discrimination, harassment or prejudice.

Teaching about diversity is age appropriate, factual and respectful and is consistent with the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and its Catholic character. The school challenges discriminatory language, racism, prejudice, bullying and other behaviour that undermines the dignity of another person.

10. SEND

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are entitled to full participation in SMSC provision. Reasonable adjustments and appropriate adaptations are made to ensure pupils can engage meaningfully in reflection, discussion, prayer and liturgy, cultural experiences, pupil leadership and the wider life of the school.

Staff take account of pupils' communication needs, developmental stage and individual circumstances when planning SMSC opportunities.

11. Safeguarding

SMSC contributes to safeguarding by helping pupils develop self-respect, healthy relationships, resilience, critical thinking, respect for boundaries and the confidence to seek help.

All SMSC provision operates within the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Staff remain alert to disclosures or concerns that may arise during discussions about relationships, beliefs, family life, discrimination, online experiences or other sensitive matters and follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

12. SMSC Across the Curriculum

All curriculum areas have the potential to contribute to SMSC. Religious Education and prayer and liturgy make a particularly significant contribution to spiritual and moral development. English, History, Geography, Science, Art, Music, PE, Computing and other subjects provide opportunities for pupils to encounter different perspectives, consider ethical questions, appreciate human creativity and understand society and culture.

RSHE and PSHE make significant contributions to pupils' social and moral development through teaching about relationships, health, wellbeing, safety, equality, responsibility and life in modern Britain. Teachers identify meaningful SMSC opportunities within curriculum planning rather than treating SMSC as an additional or disconnected activity.

13. Wider School Life

- the Catholic ethos and mission of St Robert Bellarmine;
- Religious Education, prayer and liturgy, and Catholic Social Teaching;
- RSHE and PSHE;

- pupil leadership, pupil voice, assemblies and reflection;
- charitable activities, social action and community links;
- educational visits and visitors;
- sport, extracurricular activities, arts, music, drama and cultural experiences;
- relationships and behaviour throughout the school;
- celebrations, commemorations and significant national or religious events.

14. Prevent Duty

The school's promotion of SMSC and fundamental British values contributes to pupils' resilience and ability to participate positively in society. Pupils are taught, in an age-appropriate way, how to think critically, discuss differing views respectfully and reject prejudice, discrimination and violence.

The school has regard to the current Prevent duty guidance. Any safeguarding concern relating to radicalisation or extremism is managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance. Teaching of political issues is handled impartially and with a balanced presentation of opposing views.

15. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for SMSC, promotes its Catholic vision and ethos, actively promotes fundamental British values and provides appropriate oversight of provision.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that SMSC is embedded throughout the curriculum and wider life of the school.

Subject and curriculum leaders identify and develop appropriate opportunities for SMSC within their areas and contribute to monitoring provision.

All staff promote pupils' SMSC through teaching, relationships, expectations, modelling and contribution to the Catholic life of the school. Adults model dignity, respect, fairness, compassion and responsible behaviour.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The school evaluates SMSC as part of its normal processes for monitoring curriculum quality, Catholic life and mission, pupil development and safeguarding.

Evidence may be drawn from curriculum planning, pupils' work, pupil voice, learning walks, prayer and liturgy, displays, enrichment activities, leadership opportunities, charitable and community activities and discussions with pupils and staff.

SMSC is evidenced through normal curriculum and school-improvement processes rather than requiring each teacher to maintain a separate evidence portfolio. Monitoring considers whether pupils have meaningful opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally and whether provision is accessible to all pupils.

17. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's current Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Religious Education Policy, Prayer and Liturgy Policy, RSHE Policy, PSHE curriculum, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Equality information and objectives, SEND Policy/Information Report, Online Safety Policy and relevant curriculum policies.

18. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the school and Governing Body, or earlier where there are significant changes to statutory, diocesan or Catholic guidance.