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Section 4.11 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy

Introduction

Frensham Heights is a progressive co-educational day and boarding school educating and inspiring children from Nursery to Year 13. The School provides full-time education for students of compulsory school age (constructed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996).

Frensham offers a broad and balanced curriculum that is designed to be accessible to all students. The Frensham Heights curriculum is underpinned by its ethos, mission and values. Frensham’s mission is to pioneer a better education which:

- Celebrates the individual as part of a nurturing and supportive community
- Amplifies the voices of our community, encouraging self-expression and sharing of ideas
- Brims with inspiration from strong relationships with outstanding educators in a stimulating environment

Frensham’s values are:

- Originality of thought (Frensham embraces creativity): We encourage everyone to foster their boldness and innovation, seeing opportunities locally and globally to discover and bring fresh thinking to our community
- Sprit of togetherness (Frensham nurtures community spirit): Relationships are the foundation of our school and our success, built on genuine mutual respect, compassion and kindness. We embrace freedom with a firm understanding of our responsibility towards our community.
- Respect of individuality (Frensham celebrates authenticity): This is a place where you can be the ‘true you’; we pride ourselves on that. We support all to have the confidence to stand for something and be the person you truly want to be.
- Courage to try (Frensham fuels personal dedication): We aspire to be the very best we can be, fully committing to our learning, proactively seeking improvement and working collaboratively for the benefit of the whole community.

These values are promoted through:

- Flexible high-quality teaching based on the individual needs and abilities of all students;

- Ensuring creativity of thought is utilised in all areas of the curriculum and wider school life;
- Guiding students to find their voice and their conscience through deep intellectual development;
- Emphasising emotional and mental wellbeing in all members of the Frensham community;
- Stimulating extracurricular, scholarship and enrichment opportunities.

Frensham's values are aligned with, and in harmony with, the values promoted through a spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) which are incorporated within the curriculum both explicitly and implicitly.

Frensham actively promotes fundamental British values and that discriminatory or extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine, and there will be no tolerance of abusive behaviours.

Frensham's ethos puts student development at the centre, whether this development is intellectual, spiritual, moral, social or cultural. The Frensham education is not only concerned with the pursuit of knowledge or skills, as important as they are, but prioritises the personal development of each student, which includes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This personal development is in part addressed through Frensham's broad curriculum content and its creative delivery which aims to ensure that what is taught and how it is taught are contributing as fully as possible, and in a positive way, to all aspects of students' personal development. Personal development is also encouraged through the mutually respectful relationships that the students develop with peers and adults alike.

Frensham promotes a learning environment where students are guided to make their own informed decisions about the answers to the questions that arise in these areas. They are encouraged to intellectually explore, understand and engage with the social, political, religious, ethical and moral areas of society. However, Frensham does not promote, or allow the promotion of, the specific attitudes, values and beliefs of any group or individual without also ensuring that there is opportunity for critical discussion and/or the presentation of counterview.

Frensham is non-denominational and places great importance on developing students that care for each other in the community. The ethos of Frensham is such that all people who enter our community, whether staff, pupil, student or visitor, are valued as individuals. They should set, and be entitled to expect from others, good standards of behaviour, marked by respect and responsibility.

SMSC is 'infused' within the day-to-day operation of the school and expectations are adjusted for the age and ability of students including those with special and additional needs. The school aims to create an environment that fosters the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all students through; the curriculum, health and social care, extra-curricular activities, morning talks, form tutors, charity initiatives and the Behaviour policy. Students have many opportunities at Frensham to develop their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. For example, they can:

1. identify, reflect on and explore experiences and distinguish between right and wrong;
2. discuss moral issues develop and talk about their own attitudes and values;
3. take responsibility for their own decisions;
4. develop an understanding of social responsibilities and citizenship;
5. celebrate a diversity of cultures;
6. recognise and respect the worth of others, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation or gender preference.

SMSC is delivered in a variety of ways, across a broad curriculum which includes Philosophy, Religion and Ethics (PRE). In curriculum development and planning, teachers are aware of the need to include for opportunities in spirituality and reflection as well as for thinking and key skills.

Spiritual Development

Students' spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. As their curiosity about themselves and their place in the world increases, they try to answer some of life's fundamental questions for themselves. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material wellbeing.

PRE lessons, morning talks, tutor time and Horizons Programme (PSHE) can be a major vehicle for the delivery of spiritual matters.

Planned opportunities for spiritual development in all subjects can be seen across the school. Students are given opportunities to reflect upon the meaning of spiritual experiences. Experiences commonly regarded as spiritual include the following examples, with specific opportunities made available to children at Frensham to explore them:

1. curiosity and mystery (exploration and use of the extended grounds)
2. Numinous - awe and wonder (PRE, Geography and Science lessons)
3. connection and belonging (school community and charitable events)
4. heightened self-awareness (Horizons Programme (PSHE) sessions)
5. Times as a community together (whole school gatherings and morning talks)
6. deep feelings of what is felt to be ultimately important (mock recreation of national events such as elections)

Frensham supports the process of all members of the community acquiring positive personal beliefs and values as an active basis for personal and social behaviour, for consideration of the meaning and purpose of human existence and in the seeking of answers to questions about the universe

Spiritual development is experienced largely through PRE lessons where one of the main aims is to underline the spiritual concerns of humanity (e.g. matters of life and death, the purpose of life, choices in life, etc.) and give students the opportunity to reflect on pertinent moral and spiritual themes. They also develop respect for the practices of different religious faiths

and none as well as a sympathetic understanding of their underlying values and concerns. This should develop an understanding for the variety of beliefs and the customs of the citizens of our world.

It is key that wider opportunities exist in the school's curriculum that enable students, through discussion, to think about religion and appreciate the variety of faiths by using art, drama, music, languages, science and technology, as well as humanities, to heighten awareness of the spiritual dimension in our lives. These wider opportunities create tasks which question students and enable them to work out their own position on issues, both moral and religious.

Moral Development

The moral and social development of students in developing consideration for others, an appreciation of human rights and responsibilities and a concern for justice in society is central to the Frensham ethos.

Moral development can be defined as personal development relating to human behaviour, especially the distinction between good and bad, right and wrong, with a particular reference to civil and criminal law. It is concerned about students' ability to make considered judgements about how they should act and behave as well as building on their knowledge and understanding of how to make those difficult decisions. Ultimately students should become increasingly responsible for their own actions and behaviour, acting out of conviction rather than a fear of sanctions. Frensham's approach to discipline, further enhances this.

All aspects of school life encourage pupils to develop these fundamental precepts about behaviour, to developing an understanding of the reasons for their behaviour, helping pupils to develop the skills and confidence to make positive decisions and giving pupils the confidence to think through questions about the local, national and wider global community. The school values, which permeate the life of the school in all experiences and interactions provide the foundation for positive moral development.

Social Development

This can be defined as a personal development concerned with living in a community rather than alone, with a particular reference to British values. It is important that children are given clear guidance as to what is not acceptable behaviour, so that they can develop a moral code of their own that is socially acceptable. With this in mind, each class works together at the beginning of each academic year to create Form Guidelines which are revisited regularly throughout the year through our Horizons Programme (PSHE).

Students are encouraged to consider, take part in, and actively support all of their wider communities, from their friendships at school, to local communities in and around the school. They learn to play an active role and make a difference within wider communities at a national and global level through whole school charitable endeavours. We aim to cultivate global citizens.

Students are encouraged to identify themselves as members of the community. This involves an increasing awareness of their own identity as individuals and a need to work with consideration for the feelings and wishes of others. Both the formal curriculum and extra-curricular activities promote team work and cooperation.

The development of social responsibility is monitored informally, through pastoral interactions. There are opportunities to develop this in a more organised setting through the extra-curricular activities programme.

Through Frensham's Horizons Programme (PSHE) education student awareness of moral and social issues as well as fostering a sense of responsibility and community values is developed. All students are monitored by staff, both individually as well as in groups, to ensure that their full potential is reached.

In any aspect of the curriculum, external speakers are used to expose the students to a variety of viewpoints and opinions. The emphasis is to allow students to take responsibility for their own actions and provide them with a solid base of information on which to build the kind of self-confidence and self-control expected from our students in order to function as part of a community.

Cultural Development

This can be defined as personal development concerned with the total of inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which constitute the shared basis for social action. It includes the acceptance and celebration of diversity within our communities.

Students should be made aware of the diversity of other cultures both within modern Britain and throughout the world. This can be done through PRE, Music, PE, Art, Horizons Programme (PSHE) and many other curriculum areas as shown in the curriculum plans.

Through cultural development students gain an understanding of those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills that bond together to form cultures. Cultural Development is closely related to, and integrates, certain aspects of spiritual, moral and social development. The school reinforces the values and customs of British society as a whole, and celebrates diversity and multi-culturalism. The cultural influences of home, community and religion are explored in order to extend the pupils' awareness and breadth of understanding. This is achieved through the formal curriculum, through extra-curricular activities and the value placed overtly on the pupils' own cultural interests and achievements and the way in which they enrich their experiences of all aspects of culture.

The School seeks to provide an education, which not only develops and strengthens pupils' current awareness, but also allows them to develop new cultural insights by avoiding cultural bias and promoting an appreciation of cultural diversity.

Promoting British Values

Frensham Heights promotes democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Frensham Heights is required to meet the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002, in our provision of SMSC. Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary

to fundamental British values. Attempts to promote systems that undermine fundamental British values would be completely at odds Frensham's duty to provide SMSC.

The Teachers' Standards expect teachers to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school. This includes both (i) teachers do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and (j) teachers do not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.