



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

POLICY ON SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EDUCATION SENIOR SCHOOL

Introduction

This policy takes note of the government guidance for Independent Schools: *Part 2, Schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2010) Improving the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils (November 2014), New Independent School Standards (April 2019), Character Education Framework Guidance (November 2019) Equality Act (2010) Political impartiality in Schools (Feb 2022)*

Aims

The aim of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education at MHSG is to ensure that our students feel enabled to play a confident, informed role in society, have a fully developed value system, and be able to interact with other people in a positive way. An enriched SMSC ethos in the school will ensure that students;

- I. develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- II. can distinguish right from wrong and respect the civil and criminal law of England
- III. 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 of the school and to society more widely
- IV. have a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England
- V. further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
- VI. encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- VII. encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England

Manchester High School for Girls recognises, in its aims, the importance of the personal development of each individual student in addition to her academic progress and achievement. Learning programmes encourage: reflection on **spiritual** values and principles; awareness of **moral** codes and conflicts; appreciation of their own and different cultures; participation in **cultural** experiences; and development of personal and **social** skills. The School recognises that its ethos, the example set by its staff and the opportunities for students to contribute to the school and community are as important as the taught curriculum in helping girls to become reflective, principled, tolerant, considerate and responsible members of society.

Manchester High School for Girls was founded as a non-denominational school and has always welcomed girls of different cultural traditions and faiths, or none. We aim to be a community that thrives on diversity, allowing individuals to express beliefs in their own ways, open to all, yet fostering a sense of unity in belonging to one school community.

Emphasis is placed on creating a tolerant, harmonious and inclusive environment, consistent with the School's aim of drawing on the social, cultural and religious mix to enable girls to live and grow in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Students celebrate their own spiritual beliefs within an equal opportunities context, but also learn about the beliefs of others. The intention is to promote multi-cultural understanding within the School and also to prepare students to play a positive and effective role in Britain's multi-cultural society. The range of cultures and faiths within the School is considered to be a strength of the School and also a unique opportunity for the enrichment of both students and staff.

All aspects of school life and staff/student interaction contribute to the development of a student's moral code and to her ability to make reasoned judgements on moral issues. These are embedded in the aims and values of the school.

Objectives: Spiritual education

Spiritual education encourages students to explore beliefs and experience, respect values, discover themselves and the surrounding world, use imagination and creativity and reflect. In this way, students are provided with opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of, and personal insight into, a range of religious and spiritual beliefs, especially those represented in the School – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Humanism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism – thereby increasing a student's awareness of how and why people's values differ.

Students will be encouraged to value a non-materialistic dimension to life and to reflect on questions at the heart of human existence. Teaching styles will value students' questions, give them time to reflect on their own ideas and concerns and encourage imagination and creativity.

Contributions to this aspect of spiritual education are made especially by the Religious Studies curriculum and also through student participation in multi-cultural events, religious societies, visits to sites of religious significance and contributions by visiting speakers. Friday split assemblies encourage students to reflect on the beliefs and spirituality of all members of the school community.

(See Appendix - Assemblies)

Furthermore, students are encouraged to:

- I. increase their self-knowledge by reflecting on their own strengths, weaknesses and character**
- II. develop self esteem by appreciating their strengths and character traits**
- III. gain self-confidence by trusting their own capabilities**

The School will aim to develop an ethos in which students can identify and celebrate their strengths and achievements and set personal targets to make progress in their development towards maturity and adulthood in an atmosphere of encouragement. Staff will strive to ensure that students feel comfortable in taking the necessary risks and making the necessary mistakes in the classroom in order to develop the confidence to work increasingly independently. Opportunities will be provided for girls to question their own values, attitudes and relationships. Discussion, debate and presentations to others in subject lessons and in extra-curricular activities will give students practice

in articulating their feelings, values and opinions. Lack of aspiration, discrimination, injustice and bullying will be challenged.

Self-evaluation in tutorial time, Careers Education inputs, the Well Being programme and the review process in report-reading sessions help students to identify their strengths and aspects needing improvement. Furthermore, subjects such as Art, Chemistry, English, History, Modern Foreign Languages and Religious Studies include self-assessment within their learning activities. Opportunities to work with and for others in charity fund-raising and in community work and to support fellow students in peer mentoring sessions help students to develop a sense of self worth outside the academic field. Student achievement is celebrated in displays around the school, in musical, dance and dramatic performances and in assemblies. Recognition of great human achievements is an important aspect in most academic programmes. Students will be encouraged to use imagination and creativity in their learning.

Specific elements of the taught curriculum contributing to student's spiritual awareness include:

- in Art lessons, students are encouraged to explore aspects of life other than that of the physical and material, encouraging imagination, inspiration and creativity
- in Chemistry, Geography and Physics lessons, students are encouraged to experience a sense of awe and wonder at the natural world
- students have the opportunity to sing sacred music and to perform in sacred buildings
- students are encouraged to appreciate the beauty of proof in Mathematics lessons

Objectives: Moral education

Moral education encourages students to recognise right and wrong, act consistently with their beliefs, understand consequences, investigate moral and ethical issues and offer reasoned views. Students are taught to develop their own personal, moral code in line with British values.

Staff are expected to set an example of high moral standards and of caring, concern and respect for others, to challenge views expressed when they conflict with British values, to preclude the promotion of partisan political views in their teaching and, whenever possible, to give a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Expectations of student behaviour are set out in a code of conduct, provided to students and parents. A framework of house points, commendations and certificates promotes good behaviour. There is a hierarchy of sanctions to deal with misbehaviour, with an emphasis on ensuring that students understand the consequences of their own and each other's actions.

Assemblies are often based on moral themes. The Well Being programme provides learning activities to help students to develop their moral awareness, to consider their responsibilities within relationships and extend their knowledge of human rights. Moral and ethical questions are discussed in extra-curricular debates and are built into curricular schemes of work. For example:

- Buddhist, Christian and Secular ethics (e.g. views on abortion, marriage, law and discrimination) in the Short Course GCSE Religious Studies course for all students
- ICT and the law in computing lessons and business ethics in Business & Economics AS / A2 lessons
- attitudes towards moral issues via media in Art lessons
- environmental issues in Geography and Chemistry lessons (e.g. the sulphuric acid debate)
- ethical issues (e.g. slavery) in Classics lessons

- medical use of new technologies in Biology lessons and the responsible use of nuclear and other energy resources in Physics lessons
- the consequences of polluting the planet and the differences in development across the world in Geography lessons
- issues surrounding war and morality (e.g. Hiroshima, Nazism and Facism), as well as ethical debates based on texts and the bias prevalent in texts and media in History lessons

Objectives: Social Education

Social education encourages students to use social skills in different contexts, work well with others, resolve conflicts and understand how communities work. MHSG staff:

- **provide opportunities for students to develop the inter-personal skills and personal qualities necessary to work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds, to build good relationships, to be able to resolve conflicts effectively and to show initiative and leadership**
- **equip students with the confidence to question instances of discrimination, injustice or bullying**
- **encourage students to contribute effectively to the School and to the wider community in a variety of social settings by taking part in discussion and decision-making forums.**
- **extend student knowledge about the rights, roles and duties of citizens, parents and workers**
- **increase understanding about public institutions and information systems, about economic and political principles and organisations in England**

A residential visit for Year 7 students in the autumn term, House based projects and sixth form Young Enterprise activities provide opportunities for them to work together constructively in teams and to practise leadership skills; to experience challenging tasks requiring creative thinking; and, to begin to develop a broad circle of friends across different cultural groups. Students are encouraged to solve friendship issues through discussion and negotiation.

The Well Being programme provides learning activities to help students develop the skills and understanding to assist in their own personal and social development and to acquire the knowledge required to be an effective citizen.

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| Year 7: | How to make and keep friends; the importance of good relationships; working and living with others; resolving conflict; dealing with bullying; children’s rights; e-safety; assertiveness; mindfulness; positive mental health; growth mindset; sustainability; equal opportunities for women; women’s fight for equality; forced marriage; Fundamental British Values. |
| Year 8: | Working with others: peer pressure; respect for others; e-safety; study skills and target setting; sustainability; equal opportunities; Black Lives Matter; law of the land; managing finances; mindfulness; self-awareness; sustainable living; jobs and skills; mindset; sexting; nutrition, safeguarding; diversity |
| Year 9: | Poppy Project; International Peace, safeguarding; diversity role models; careers; budgeting; mindset; individual identity; working with others; contraception and sexual relationships; healthy relationships; the rights of the child; equality, Black History; sustainability-fast fashion; inspirational women; First Aid, Sexually transmitted diseases; racism in sport; healthy eating; democracy. |
| Year 10: | Effective study skills; safeguarding; Careers – creating a CV; Black History; equality; British Sign Language Course; democracy; finance; working with others; choosing your A Levels; mindfulness; revision skills; contraception and relationships; sexual harassment; healthy relationships . |

Year 11:	Equality; political awareness; Safeguarding; Careers – skills and competencies; youth activism; good relationships with others – assertiveness; personal confidence; First Aid; effective revision; sexually transmitted diseases; Proud Trust
Year 12:	Equality; breast cancer awareness; the democratic process; intimate female health; self defence; soft skills; careers – CVs; Higher Education, UCAS and Unifrog; self-defense; eating disorders; memory skills; equal opportunities in the information technology industry; drugs; living with HIV; safeguarding; revision skills; mindfulness; self-esteem and peer relationships.
Year 13:	Interview skills; drugs; tricky interviews; working with others; Endometriosis; safeguarding; pensions, finance and tax; nutrition; sexual health; equality; breast cancer awareness; UCAS; equal opportunities in the information technology industry; living with HIV; nutrition.

(See Appendix – The Well Being Programme)

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for others, especially students younger than themselves. They develop awareness of the needs of wider society through fund-raising for year group charities.

Students are also encouraged to take leadership and team roles within the school community – as form monitors, Young Activist form representatives, Focus Theme Week form representatives, House Captains, Diversity representatives and Student Council representatives; as peer mentors offering personal and academic support; as part of the Head Girl Team; as Sixth Form Prefects supporting Years 7, 8 and 9; through enrichment activities such as Sports Leader’s Award in Years 10 and 12, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, community service placements, the Medlock Scheme and Young Enterprise and through leading extra-curricular clubs and religious and secular assemblies. Teaching methodologies also encourage students to work with others and to appreciate different perspectives and approaches as a result.

Objectives: Cultural education

Through cultural education, students are encouraged to appreciate cultural influences, participate in culture opportunities and understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity.

Through extra-curricular activities, the taught curriculum and examples set, staff at MHSG:

- **teach students about the origins, development and traditions of their own culture**
- **raise awareness of, and develop understanding about, other cultures represented in Britain and the wider world**
- **encourage students to appreciate how cultural diversity enriches the school and the wider community and to value this cultural diversity**
- **enable students to appreciate world culture in the arts, media, through the internet and foreign travel**
- **help students function effectively in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society and to resist cultural discrimination and racism of any form**
- **encourage active participation in artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities**
- **uphold and actively promote fundamental British values**

The school makes use of the wide range of cultural opportunities within and beyond Greater Manchester. Departments arrange visits to local and regional historical and religious sites, art galleries, museums and exhibitions. There are opportunities to attend concerts, plays and other cultural events.

Modern Language teaching promotes cultural and linguistic awareness and the European dimension and the foreign language assistants contribute to greater cultural awareness among the school community. Visits abroad encourage international understanding. There are regular visits to sites of classical, historical, cultural and artistic interest within and beyond Europe.

The School provides opportunities for students to learn about cultures represented within the school and to appreciate how a range of cultural traditions enriches the school and the wider community. Assemblies provide opportunities for cultural presentations. Students are pro-active in arranging multi-cultural events. They make contributions beyond the school, for example in partnership with a local inner-city primary school and participation in the MUN encourages cross-cultural understanding.

Specific elements of the taught curriculum which relate to the students' cultural education include:

- in Religion and Philosophy lessons, Year 7 girls are encouraged to consider personal and social identity (e.g. Who am I and where do I belong? What does it mean to be British?) and in Year 8, what does it mean to be a Muslim?
- in the year 10 GCSE Religious Studies course, students participate in Jewish festivals e.g. Pesach.
- the Well Being programme provides inputs on different cultural groups within the UK and the need for understanding and mutual respect, the effects of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination and how to challenge them.
- in Art lessons, students are encouraged to recognise how images and artefacts reflect cultural perspectives
- the study of demographics and genetic diseases in different groups in Biology lessons
- music associated with different faiths (e.g. reggae and rag)
- the study of cultural norms in Psychology lessons
- exploring patterns of migration and multicultural societies in urban areas and the influence of globalisation on culture in Geography lessons
- the cultural backgrounds of different groups involved in the slave trade, British politics and values in History lessons
- prose and poetry from different cultures in English lessons

Roles and responsibilities

Teaching Staff

- I. preclude the promotion of partisan political views in their teaching
- II. take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that, where political issues are brought to the attention of students – while they are in attendance at the school, while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school, or in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.
- III. actively promote fundamental British values and challenge opinions expressed that are contrary to these values
- IV. respect the rights of others and to respect those with different beliefs, in line with the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- V. act as a positive role model in order to help students develop high moral standards and a responsible attitude

- VI. develop supportive relationships with students
- VII. incorporate spiritual, moral, social and cultural education into programmes of work and learning activities, where appropriate
- VIII. organise extra-curricular activities around spiritual, moral, cultural and social themes.

Heads of Sections / Heads of Year / Form Tutors

- I. Deliver Well Being lessons which incorporate spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes

Heads of Department

- I. Include spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes within departmental schemes of work

Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning)

- I. Monitor the implementation of the policy in departments

Deputy Head (Pastoral)

- I. Oversee the implementation of the policy across the School
- II. Work closely with the Head of Department for Well Being to monitor the implementation of the policy in the Well Being programme

It is the responsibility of Senior Managers and the Pastoral Team to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of girls through assembly presentations.

Updated in November 2022 by Ann Goddard

Approved by Governors Academic Development Committee November 2022

Appendix A



ASSEMBLY POLICY & PROCEDURES

Aims

Assemblies provide opportunities for collective reflection where different year groups meet on a regular basis. They play an important role in the spiritual, moral and social development of the students. The aim is to promote a sharing of values, to foster a spirit of unity and community and to raise awareness of the beliefs, needs and rights of others. Assemblies are used to consider current moral and ethical issues and to stimulate the exploration of complex philosophical ideas. Assemblies are also a time to celebrate and to take pride in the achievements of individual students, teams of students and of the school as a whole through the formal presentation of awards and certificates. Participation by staff and students is encouraged, and individual students provide musical items as girls enter and leave the assembly hall.

Procedures

Assemblies are held at least twice weekly, after morning registration. On Monday and Wednesday, the assembly is of a multi-cultural nature, emphasising shared values and traditions, and is normally led by the Head Mistress.

- Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form meet on Mondays
- Years 7, 8 and 9 meet on Wednesdays

Forms also meet with their year group. Sixth Form have a weekly forum led by the Director of Sixth Form Studies or Head of Junior Sixth / Senior Sixth. Other year groups meet on a rotational basis and forms prepare presentations to their year group. This helps to develop a sense of unity within the form and within the year group, and provide contact with the Head of Year.

On Fridays, students assemble in year groups to listen to a student led assembly about religion. The religions represented are Christianity, Hinduism/ Sikhism, Islam, Buddhism and Judaism. These assemblies are run by sixth form students and are supervised by a member of staff who ensures compliance with the equal opportunities policy and provides guidance to the organisers. The assembly rota is planned on a carousel of six weeks, designed for each year group to hear the same assembly; the purpose being for students to learn about the principle religious beliefs practiced by members of the school community. Year 7 students attend a year assembly for the first term instead of the split assemblies in order that the Head of Year 7 has frequent contact and can therefore provide more support and guidance in the settling-in period. A secular assembly is also provided in the rota which focuses on contemporary moral issues.

Special assemblies provide an opportunity for girls to describe their own religious beliefs and practices to other girls and so learn from each other. For example, the Harvest assembly is based on common themes, enabling the different religious and secular groups to contribute presentations to the rest of the school.



The Well Being Programme

Aims

The Well Being Programme provides training and education for life in order for students to develop the self-confidence and resilience they need to make the right decisions, flourish and feel able to take on all kinds of new challenges with the determination to succeed.

Objectives

The programme is centred on three key areas: Health and Well Being, Relationships and Sexual Education and Living in the Wider World. The school community is invited to reflect upon these areas through the Well Being programme.

By participating fully in the sessions, students will gain the knowledge, interpersonal and social skills and understanding to play an effective role in society at local, national and international levels. It will help them to become informed, considerate and responsible citizens, aware of their duties and rights. The course also seeks to promote spiritual, moral and cultural development, making students more self-confident and accountable, both in and beyond the classroom. It encourages them to play a helpful part in the life of Manchester High School for Girls, their own neighbourhoods, communities and the wider world. It also informs them about our economy and democratic institutions and values; encourages respect for different national religions and ethnic identities, and develops their ability to reflect on issues and take part in discussions.

Through their Well Being sessions, the students learn how the political and social culture of the country has changed in the past, is changing now and will continue to change in the future. They are encouraged to understand how these changes impact on them, and how they can help to shape the changes that are yet to come.

The sessions are held as form tutorial groups, third or half year groups and whole year groups.