

University of Chester

Academies Trust



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Title: Spiritual, Moral , Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy Secondary				

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1. Introduction

Academies and schools within University of Chester Academies Trust (UCAT) which have Church of England faith designation have an ethos founded on Christian teaching and values and in particular recognises the uniqueness and worth of each individual member of the academy/school both students and adults alike, all of whom are loved by God.

Faith UCAT academies recognise that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) element of students' education is crucial to their development as individuals, allowing them to take their rightful place in their community as local, national and global citizens. SMSC is about the values students are encouraged to hold and their attitude towards learning, knowledge and society. SMSC is fundamental in preparing young people for society at UCAT faith academies/schools. Students are helped to develop positive attitudes and beliefs by being given opportunities to:

- develop spiritual values and reasoned personal and moral values;
- consider the pluralistic nature of society; developing their understanding and respect for those with different religions, beliefs and ways of life;
- value everyone equally;
- make and develop personal relationships, based on trust, self-esteem and mutual respect;
- become active, responsible citizens in a democratic society;
- develop an appreciation of human achievements and aspirations; and
- develop an understanding of the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups, nations and the environment

At UCAT faith academies SMSC permeates the life and work of the school/academy. Through SMSC we seek to develop attitudes and values that will enable students to become responsible and caring members of society. We give students the opportunity for spiritual reflection and encourage them to explore the fundamental questions of life, including their own personal existence, journey and purpose. We provide students with a curriculum that will enable them to develop a knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures, particularly those within their own society. We seek to foster an attitude of tolerance and acceptance towards those from a culture and background different from their own. Students are encouraged to develop an understanding of the world, society and the community and accept responsibility as a citizen as well as the capacity to tackle moral and spiritual dilemmas and to try to reach independent judgements which reflect universal human principles.

Through perception and sensitivity, tolerance and respect for others as individuals and in groups we would also expect students to develop questioning, enquiring minds and learn how to express their ideas appropriately.

As a Trust we are aware of our collective responsibilities towards spiritual, moral, social and moral education in our faith academies and we:

- ensure that all staff are aware of their role in developing students' morals;
- offer opportunities to develop students' interpersonal skills, self-esteem and prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- ensure we celebrate student achievement, foster a sense of community, explore relevant SMSC issues and involve half termly Achievement assemblies for all year groups to recognise effort and participation in the life of the school and activities outside the classroom. The rewards system encourages a culture of success and achievement for all. Students are also encouraged to contribute to the school by developing their leadership roles as prefects, peer mentors, tutor and worship representatives, etc. Sport of all types also fosters leadership qualities;
- ensure students have opportunity to participate in extra-curricular and enrichment activities;
- ensure that the PSHE and worship programmes provide opportunities for discussion, challenge and reflection;
- build community and business links into the curriculum wherever possible;
- ensure displays reflect and respect cultural variety;
- provide opportunities for all students to discuss issues and to take on responsibility within lessons, extra-curricular activities, trips, visits and enrichment days such as the collapsed weeks and spirituality days; and

- ensure our provision and support for the teaching of languages provides a rich variety of additional opportunities for students in terms of developing aspects of SMSC. Our overseas visits are particularly powerful in developing their sense of being part of a global community.

Teaching staff are expected to provide a role model based on courtesy, mutual respect, positive intent and be prepared to listen to students' views and encourage them to listen to each other.

They are also aware of the opportunities presented every day through curricular and extra-curricular activities to develop students' skills, attitudes and understanding.

2. Spiritual Development

Spiritual development is concerned with how a student develops:

- personal values and beliefs;
- a willingness to reflect, question and explore;
- an ability to communicate these beliefs in discussion and behaviour;
- an understanding of the value and role of faith and religion in societies; and
- tolerance of other people

Spiritual development is personal and unique to each individual. It is about the meaning in life, truth and ultimate values. It includes imagination, inspiration and creativity. It also includes an awareness of self-identify and self-worth. At UCAT faith academies we promote spiritual development as part of student personal development though:

- The school Christian values and the work of the Chaplain and Chaplaincy Team including local ministers;
- celebration of student achievement;
- the PSHE Programme;
- Religious Education;
- all subjects of the curriculum;
- worship activities;
- the ethos of the school – values, attitudes and expectations which encourage imagination, inspiration and contemplation;
- opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual issues;
- opportunities for reflection on aspects of their lives; and
- wonder at the natural world and human achievement.

3. Moral Development

Moral development is concerned with students' knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to right and wrong within the accepted codes of practices of society. Their knowledge and awareness of values and attitudes of individuals and society as a whole and socially acceptable code of behaviour is important. The quality of relationships that students experience, the standards of behaviour in the school as well as the Christian values promoted by the school will form the basis of any judgment on moral development as well as the extent to which students show:

- an understanding of the difference between right and wrong;
- respect people, truth and property;
- taking responsibility as stewards of God's creation;
- a concern for how their actions may affect others;
- the ability to make responsible judgements on moral issues;
- personal conduct ensuring they take responsibility for their own actions;
- personal behaviour through principles;
- a knowledge of standards of morality; and
- the importance of compassion and tact.

UCAT faith schools/academies are social organisations and their functioning depends on the broad acceptance of rules, codes of conduct and behaviour and discipline based on a clear set of moral

principles. UCAT faith schools/academies have values and expectations which are shared with parents/carers, staff and students including:

- telling the truth;
- respecting the rights and property of others;
- being considerate towards other people;
- taking responsibility for one's own actions;
- self-discipline; and
- respecting the beliefs and practices of others in a multicultural society.

The essence of moral behaviour is to build a framework of values which regulate personal behaviour through principles rather than fear of punishment or reward. These values provide the framework for students to develop their attitudes and understanding on morality and develop the self-confidence to hold to this code of values against a variety of pressures. Moral development is about understanding the principles and social values behind actions and decisions. At UCAT faith academies students are expected and educated to reject any form of bullying, discrimination or cruelty and to report any incident that may occur.

4. Social Development

Social development is concerned with the skills and personal qualities necessary for individuals to live and function effectively in society. Social development is based on the acceptance of group rules and the ability to see oneself in a wider context. The quality of relationships in school is crucial in forming students' attitudes to good social behaviour and self-discipline. The school/academy helps prepare students to live in society by providing knowledge and understanding of society, its institutions, structures, and characteristics, political, non-political and economic organisations. The school/academy plans for social development of students through a range of teaching and learning activities including:

- classroom organisation and management;
- student grouping and opportunities for collaborative work;
- the UCAT vision and values;
- school/academy council, worship representatives, learning mentors and team sport;
- school/academy productions and concerts;
- residential trips;
- celebrations of achievement;
- the PSHE curriculum;
- school/academy industry links;
- extra-curricular activities;
- charity fundraising;
- university visits;
- foreign visits; and
- leadership opportunities which support students in the school/academy community such as learning mentors.

5. Cultural Development

A student's cultural development refers to an increasing understanding of those values, beliefs, customs, knowledge and skills which link groups together and give people a sense of identity. At UCAT faith academies we seek to develop in students an understanding and awareness of their culture within a multi-cultural society and encourage personal values and self-esteem. The school/academy curriculum provides experiences of all aspects of culture for students including languages, aesthetic, mathematical, literacy, technological, scientific, musical, political, economic and religious education. There are also opportunities for the following:

- development of fundamental British values;
- creative and performing arts for all students;
- cultural visits aboard;
- visits to centres of cultural interest such as museums, theatre productions and places of worship;

- extra-curricular activities and residentials;
- opportunity to explore a range of multicultural themes through literature, art, music, RE and worship;
- engagement with artists, musicians dancers and clergy and others who visit school;
- perform to an audience or speak publicly in an act of worship, drama production, school/academy council;
- participate in school/academy and community events such as performances, fund raising events and charitable activities; and
- develop an understanding of Britain's local, national, European, commonwealth and global dimensions.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Provision for SMSC and its effectiveness is reviewed annually. This is achieved by monitoring of teaching and learning and work scrutiny by school/academy leads, together with the Senior Leadership Team, on SMSC, worship, PSHE and curriculum. This information is reviewed by the CEO on behalf of the UCAT Board.