



Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall

Curriculum Policy (including SMSC)

Approved by the Pastoral & Curriculum Committee January 2016

Principles:

The School believes that the term *Curriculum* should be understood in its broadest sense and that it comprises all learning and other experiences that the school plans for its pupils.

The National Curriculum and exam board specifications are important elements of the school curriculum, but they are not the whole. Important aspects of the curriculum may take place away from the School premises or outside timetabled School hours.

Given the academically able intake, the main emphasis of the school curriculum should be to prepare pupils for higher education, but it should ensure that appropriate opportunities are given to *all pupils* to realise their potential. It should prepare all students for their future roles as students, workers, parents, members of the community and lifelong learners. In particular, we should be mindful of the changing nature of both the labour market and higher education sector for young people.

The School curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, social, physical and cultural development of pupils (see appendix 2). It should encourage cross-curricular engagement and the broadening of subjects beyond the classroom and into the wider community.

Aims:

In pursuing the above principles, the School aims to:

- Provide learning opportunities (both in and out of the classroom) which promote breadth, balance and relevance
- Ensure that pupils reach the highest possible standards of achievement
- Provide a variety of experience and teaching approaches which foster both a sense of challenge and enjoyment
- Provide all pupils with the highest achievable levels of literacy, numeracy and other key skills
- Allow departments to 'personalise' their curriculums and assessment pathways in order to best represent and deliver their subjects by staff and to students.

Procedures

In realising the above aims, the School will:

- Supplement the full range of academic subjects with enrichment activities
- Provide regular formal assessment of the achievement of each student in each curriculum area as an integral part of the learning process.
- Provide clear information about the curriculum and the achievement of pupils to staff, pupils, parents, governors and others in accordance with national requirements
- Maintain Schemes of Work in all subject areas which identify required learning outcomes, possible teaching methods and assessment opportunities
- Provide clear information and pertinent advice to pupils and parents about Option choices for KS4 and the Sixth Form
- Provide, where appropriate, a cross-curricular approach to the teaching of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills

Responsibilities

The Pastoral and Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body will review the School's curriculum model and the effectiveness of this policy annually.

The Teacher responsible for overseeing curriculum matters is:

Mr R J Langton (the Deputy Head)

Appendix 2 – SMSC at Queen Mary’s Grammar School

The importance of SMSC at Queen Mary’s Grammar School

- The development of pupils’ SMSC is integral to learning. Learning respect of oneself and respect towards others creates a high standard of behaviour, fostering a more positive learning environment. In turn, a more positive learning environment allows students to achieve their full academic potential.
- The ability to empathise with others and also recognise right from wrong means a young adult is better equipped to become an active and dutiful citizen in society.
- Furthermore, Queen Mary’s Grammar School prides itself on being a multi-cultural environment. In developing understanding of different cultures and beliefs, students appreciate each other more and therefore a more harmonious school community is created – one that students are proud to be part of. This cultural understanding and respect of the school community prepares students with vital understanding of the world around them, again equipping them for life beyond the school gates.
- SMSC development means that uniqueness can be celebrated; tolerance of others and appreciation of difference are encouraged throughout the school community.
- Additionally, pupils learn that forgiveness and acceptance are fundamental aspects to the school ethos.
- The understanding of cultural and societal values will enrich understanding of our society. It also gives them a sense of responsibility and duty towards society.
- SMSC allows pupils to reflect upon their own beliefs, feeling and responses to experiences, thus enabling them to understand who they are as an individual.

Queen Mary’s provides students with understanding of fundamental British values, in keeping with the November 2014 statement by the Department for Education. These include;

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

The aim of this appendix is:

- To demonstrate the integrated approach Queen Mary’s Grammar School has taken to ensuring SMSC development for all students.
- To highlight where certain aspects of SMSC are approached – both in terms of opportunities within the curriculum as well as extra-curricular.
- To ensure all staff are aware of the expectation placed upon them to uphold good values and positive behaviour as role model to the pupils.
- To inform all parents, pupils and anyone connected with the school of the importance placed on SMSC development.
- To assure any interested party that social and moral issues are explored in a safe environment.

Spiritual Development at QMGS

The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people’s faiths, feelings and values
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

Point 134, Page 36 - School Inspection Handbook from September 2015

At Queen Mary's Grammar School, opportunities for spiritual development can be identified across the school, both in and out of the classroom:

- Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their own beliefs, including values, faiths and feelings, through the community assemblies, which take place throughout the week. These assemblies provide a platform in which a variety of topics are presented. Pupils are encouraged to consider their own opinions and reactions, both as an individual but also as part of a greater community and society.
- PHSEE Schemes of Work include areas where students are directed to consider different faiths, societies and cultures and how we can appreciate, tolerate and/or understand difference.
- All students study GCSE full course in Religious Studies. This course develops their understanding of Religion and the wider world, providing pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding of Religions by exploring beliefs, cultures and religious societies and practices. Students are allowed to question, reflect and personally respond to fundamental questions, including truth, values and identity.
- A broad and varied curriculum promotes awe and fascination of the world around them. It inspires pupils to question the world around them and thirst to learn more.
- A healthy platform for debating is encouraged, both in discussion time in class but also within various societies such as Debating Society and Economics and Politics Society.
- Subject tutors, society co-ordinators and club leaders encourage students to use creativity within their learning, using varied tasks to stimulate the use of their imaginations in higher level activities.
- Response tasks and reflection time are encouraged as part of learning so pupils can independently consider their work and form opinions.
- Pupils are encouraged to form friendships in the school which are permanent and satisfying. The Queen Mary's Club maintains contact with each student and promotes the permanence of the friendships formed at Queen Mary's and the shared QMGS identity of every pupil.
- Pastoral leaders ensure pupils who fail to appreciate and respect the spiritual development of others are reminded of the importance of this element of their learning. These pupils are expected to reflect upon this themselves through the completion of an imposition form. Repeated offences mean greater consequences as the interruption of any learning is not tolerated at Queen Mary's, including SMSC.
- Any student struggling with their own self-worth and self-esteem is quickly identified by staff and referred to their Pastoral Leader. The Pastoral Leader then determines the course of action, which can vary from in-school counselling, peer mentoring or a variety of other actions.
- Students are encouraged to attend trips abroad, linking to one of the school's pillars "International in Outlook". Trips are as diverse as exchanges to Spain and France, to trips to China, space camps in Alabama, trekking in Tanzania and wonder at the geography of Iceland and Sicily. Each trip allows students to consider different cultures and also awe at the wonders beyond the UK borders.

Moral Development at QMGS

The moral development of pupils is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, recognise legal boundaries and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues and ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.

Point 135, Page 36 - School Inspection Handbook from September 2015

Moral awareness is considered of great importance of Queen Mary's. We consider the formation of good moral values during adolescence as key to success in adulthood:

- Fundamental to developing moral values is firstly the appreciation of one's self-worth. This valuing of self is promoted through the celebration of individual progress and achievement, no matter how small. For example, house points are given as recognition of academic achievement or service to the school.
- Queen Mary's is proud of the high behavioural standards and moral code we expect of every student. Any poor behaviour is quickly identified and staff follow the behavioural policy. Understanding what is expected from a school environment replicates the laws and expectations these pupils will abide by in later life.
- Detentions are only used as a final resort, issued for repeated inappropriate behaviour or more major offences. Before issuing detentions, teachers are expected to encourage students to consider and reflect upon their actions by completing imposition forms. Students record their actions and state why their actions may be deemed improper. This process means students understand the code of conduct by stating what their actions were and why these actions were deemed inappropriate.
- Understanding what is right and wrong is regularly discussed, from school assembly to PHSEE lessons. Pupils enjoy opportunities across the curriculum to explore moral concepts and values such as justice, equality, personal rights. Staff ensure they provide a safe environment in which to discuss these, sometimes difficult, issues.
- By carrying out duties, such as chair duty or canteen duty, both staff and student are acting responsibly and morally within the school community. They are physically part of the community, sharing the responsibility of creating a positive environment.
- A number of clubs and societies allow varying platforms for considering moral and ethical issues (such as Debating Society, Economics and Politics Society) allowing students to appreciate different viewpoints, as well as form reasoned judgments.
- Charitable initiatives (such as Pennies for Charity and Non-Uniform Days) are integral to the school, and also relate to the Pillar of the school "generous in approach".

Social Development at QMGS

The social development of pupils is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, for example working and socialising with other pupils, including those from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- acceptance and engagement 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; they develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

Point 136, Page 36 - School Inspection Handbook from September 2015

As a multi-cultural school in a multi-cultural geographical area of the United Kingdom, understanding a wide variety of backgrounds is vital to creating a harmonious school community. We believe that the school community reflects a wider society, and thus respect of religious, ethnic and socio-economic difference as well as respect of personal property, the environment and others' values are integral to a congruent and functioning society.

- Queen Mary's is proud of its mentoring programme, which services both students in this school, but also supports students in English and Maths at the Walsall Studio School. Many Departments have set up their own mentoring programme whilst the school directly coordinates mentors for students in Maths, Science and English. Queen Mary's is also proud to have a number of STEM volunteers. Sixth Form students relinquish their own private study periods and use this time to support students who are struggling academically or socially.
- The Sixth Form prefect selection process ensures student's service to the school is considered through the completion of a "Giving Form." Additionally, the Sixth Form are allowed to vote for who they think should represent them as prefects, as well as a staff vote.
- There is a Pupil SLT, which meets fortnightly with SLT. This allows the Pupil SLT to be included in the wider management of the school, and also gives SLT an insight into the school for the pupils' point of view.

- Mock elections are run alongside the major elections. Sixth Form pupils represent political parties and present their campaign in assembly. All students then vote for their winning party and the “returning officer” announces this in a final assembly. This process not only includes all students in an activity but also provides an insight into how our government is formed, thus promoting British values of democracy.
- Queen Mary’s Anti-bullying policy is adhered to stringently. The school has a student and staff committee which actively engage with the school community, providing information on reporting bullying.
- The school runs a Mali Jenkins Project; Students can volunteer to work with a local care home for people with debilitating, often age-related problems such as dementia. This has a profound impact on the volunteers, who find it both rewarding but also eye-opening.
- School Council meets once per half term with student representatives from every form. The Council puts forward student views on change and development for the school which are then discussed. Views that are most popular and practical are then taken to SLT for discussion.
- Queen Mary’s is proud of the wide variety of extra-curricular activities available, but also proud that many of these are Sixth Form led societies.
- The Queen Mary’s House system provides an additional sense of community and inclusion, as Houses compete against one another in a variety of sports, events, activities and also service to the school. It provides opportunities for students to flourish in a number of ways, but also teaches participation as an important value as well as humility in defeat.

Cultural Development at QMGS

The cultural development of pupils is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and those of others
- understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain
- knowledge of Britain’s democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities
- interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Point 137, Page 36 - School Inspection Handbook from September 2015

- Collective worship and assemblies take themed approaches to allow greater opportunity to explore cultural diversity.
- As evidenced through the displays around school, school Twitter© updates and pupil green books, extra-curricular is varied and highly subscribed by the students and staff. Pupils are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. Many thrive and flourish in areas which are not directly within the Curriculum.
- History and PHSEE lessons include content regarding the history of the British people and the formation of the modern society. This understanding includes the formation of the British legal system, the development and shaping of the British parliamentary system and the shift in demographics within the British Isles. It also gives a sense of Britain's local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions. This understanding of core British values encourages students to celebrate the diverse society around them, both in school as well as the wider community.
- The foundation of Queen Mary’s school itself is steeped in tradition and History. Founded in 1554, the school continues to send its Year 7 pupils to the tomb of Mary I on Founders’ Day to pay respects. The respect of the school’s traditions is expected as it forms a key part of the culture of the school.
- Queen Mary’s respects the varied cultures represented at the school and as such grants authorised absences for all requests of religious holidays.

- Aside from collective worship, provision of a designated prayer room is available for Muslims on Fridays. Similarly, special arrangements and considerations are made for religious activities such as Ramadan which may impact on pupil's focus or physical capabilities, for example PE is altered to move children from the sun and reduce strenuous exercise.
- The Christmas Carol Service and Easter concerts are part of the annual school calendar. All pupils are invited to be part of the celebrations.
- Remembrance Day is a significant date in the school's calendar. There is a special assembly where the school remembers all servicemen and women who gave their life during the World Wars, but especially remembers the fallen Old Boys of the school. The CCF take part in a Remembrance Sunday parade in Walsall, showcasing Queen Mary's cadets at their finest.

Monitoring and evaluation

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

- Audit of key SMSC themes included in each community assembly.
- Monitoring of PHSEE Co-ordinator's Schemes of Work.
- Inclusion of SMSC in lesson observations.
- SLT management of School Council and House System.
- Anti-Bullying Committee and Policy
- Health and Safety Committee and Policy
- Anti-Radicalisation and Extremist Policy
- All staff to give 5 Days extra-curricular time to enrich opportunities available for students.
- Staff are expected to be role-models for students and thus have a code of conduct to adhere to.