Highcroft School

Curriculum, SMSC and Fundamental British Values Policy

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Curriculum, SMSC and Fundamental British Values Policy

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Contributors	Rob Arrowsmith		
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Note	This policy must not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

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1. Supporting Documents

- PSHE & RSHE Policy (EDE.POL.003)
- SEND Policy (EDU.POL.022) and Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour Policy (EDU.POL.027) and Anti-Bullying Policy (EDU.POL.007)
- Safeguarding Policy (EDE.POL.002) and Online Safety Policy (EDU.POL.009)
- Alternative Provision Policy

Related policies are held within RADAR in the School's policy folder.

2. Introduction

At Highcroft School, we believe every pupil deserves a curriculum that is broad, balanced and ambitious, and that opens doors rather than closing them. Many of our pupils arrive having missed time in education or having found earlier settings hard to manage. We design our curriculum, and the wider life of the school, to rebuild confidence, fill gaps and give each pupil the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to thrive in modern Britain.

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This policy sets out our approach to the curriculum, to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils, and to the active promotion of fundamental British values. We treat these as one connected whole. What we teach, how we model relationships, and what pupils take away about living well alongside others all shape the same young person.

3. Aim & Scope

This policy applies to all staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers, and visitors at Highcroft School. It aims to:

- Set out the intent, content and delivery of our broad and balanced curriculum.
- explain how we support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the school day.
- Show how we actively promote each of the fundamental British values by name, and how we evidence that pupils have understood them.
- Make clear how we meet the Independent School Standards on the curriculum and on the development of pupils.
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in modern Britain.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

Curriculum. Everything we plan for pupils to learn, both formal and informal, across the whole school day. This includes lessons, enrichment, therapeutic input and the everyday social learning that happens between adults and pupils.

SMSC. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. It is how pupils develop their own values, learn right from wrong, work well with others, and understand the world and cultures around them.

Fundamental British values. The four values named in the Independent School Standards: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Tolerance here means tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, not a general idea of respect.

Cultural capital. The knowledge, language and experiences that help a pupil take part fully in society and make the most of their next steps.

5. Policy Content

5.1 Principles and Approach

Our approach rests on the following principles.

Broad, balanced and ambitious. We hold high expectations for every pupil and refuse to narrow the curriculum because a pupil has additional needs.

Adapted, not reduced. We adapt content, pace and support so pupils can access learning, rather than removing learning from them.

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Relational and trauma informed. We understand behaviour as communication and build learning on safe, trusting relationships, in line with the Keys Connect model.

Active promotion, not generalised values. We promote each fundamental British value by name, not a vague set of core values.

Evidenced through pupil work. We treat pupils' own work and voice as the strongest evidence that learning, including SMSC and British values, has landed.

Preparation for adulthood. Everything we teach is pointed at independence, good qualifications where appropriate, and confident participation in adult and community life.

Our curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced, and ambitious, fully compliant with the Independent School Standards and aligned with statutory expectations, including the National Curriculum in England. It is carefully adapted to meet the diverse needs of pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

5.2 Curriculum, SMSC and Fundamental British Values in Practice

Curriculum intent

At Highcroft School, we set aspirational end points for each pupil, informed by their starting points, their EHCP outcomes and their individual needs. We sequence knowledge so pupils build towards meaningful qualifications, independence and successful transitions into adulthood.

Curriculum content

We ensure structured and meaningful learning across the following domains:-

- **Linguistic** – English, communication, literacy, and where appropriate, modern foreign languages.
- **Mathematical** – Mathematics, numeracy, and problem-solving.
- **Scientific** – Science and technology.
- **Technological** – Computing and/or design and technology.
- **Human and Social** – History, geography, economic education, religious education and/or social studies.
- **Physical** – Physical education, movement, health, and fitness.
- **Aesthetic and Creative** – Art, music, drama, and/or design.

In addition, our curriculum:-

- Delivers core knowledge and skills aligned with the National Curriculum, with appropriate adaptation for pupils with SEND.
- Provides Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) where statutory.

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- Promotes Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development and British Values—democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance.
- Embeds a strong focus on independence, life skills, and personal development, placing emotional wellbeing and SEMH growth at the centre.
- Prepares pupils for further education, training, employment, and confident participation in adult and community life.

Where appropriate, and with the approval of the director of education/ regional director, the school may adopt nationally recognised curriculum designs and frameworks to support consistency, quality, and statutory alignment. Examples include the use of White Rose Maths for mathematics, Jigsaw for PSHE and RSHE, and other accredited schemes that support progression, adaptation, and inspection readiness. These resources are selected to ensure accessibility for pupils with SEND and SEMH needs, and to support staff in delivering sequenced, ambitious learning across settings.

Our curriculum gives pupils experience across each of the areas required by the standards. We cover linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education, adapted for the age, aptitude and needs of our pupils, including those with an EHC plan.

Alongside these areas, our curriculum:

- Delivers core knowledge and skills, with appropriate adaptation for pupils with SEND.
- Provides personal, social, health and economic education, including relationships, sex and health education in line with the 2025 statutory guidance that becomes statutory from 1 September 2026.
- Promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and actively promotes the fundamental British values.
- Builds independence, life skills and cultural capital, with emotional wellbeing at the centre.
- Prepares pupils for further education, training, employment and adult life.

Curriculum Implementation

Our curriculum is delivered through:-

- Small class sizes, or in some cases on a 1:1 basis, with appropriately qualified and trained staff.
- Balanced weekly timetables that ensure depth in core subjects while allowing time for SEMH enrichment and therapeutic input.
- Trauma-informed and relational pedagogy, tailored to SEMH needs.
- Individualised pathways based on EHCP outcomes, baseline assessments, and ongoing review.

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- Access to external accreditation at appropriate levels, including GCSEs, Entry Level, Functional Skills, ASDAN, AQA awards, and vocational qualifications.
- A consistent emphasis on inclusion, safeguarding, and wellbeing across all subjects and settings.

Measuring Curriculum Impact

We evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum through:-

- Academic progress tracked against personalised and nationally recognised benchmarks, reviewed by school and organisational leadership, including governors.
- Social, emotional, and behavioural development, using validated tools and frameworks.
- Achievement of external qualifications, evidencing readiness for next steps.
- Preparation for adulthood, including employment, further study, and independent living, tracked against EHCP targets and aspirations.
- Attendance, engagement, and participation data, analysed to inform interventions and support.
- Feedback from pupils, parents, carers, and professionals, ensuring the curriculum remains responsive and relevant.
- External quality assurance, including Ofsted inspections, local authority reviews, and commissioner feedback.

Ultimate Measure of Success

Pupils leave our schools with:-

- Improved life chances through successful progression to the next stage of their education and/or chosen vocation.
- Greater self-confidence, independence, and resilience.
- The skills, knowledge, and qualifications to progress successfully into adulthood.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

We support SMSC across the curriculum, the ethos of the school, assemblies, tutor time, enrichment and restorative practice. Pupils develop self-knowledge and self-esteem, learn to tell right from wrong and respect the law, work well with others, and explore and respect a range of faiths, beliefs and cultures. Restorative approaches help pupils understand the impact of their actions, repair relationships and take responsibility.

Actively promoting fundamental British values

We do not rely on a general set of values. We actively promote each of the four fundamental British values by name. For each one, we are clear about where it is

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taught, how it is promoted across school life, and what pupil work shows that pupils have understood it.

Democracy. We teach democracy through the curriculum, for example in humanities and tutor time, and we promote it through pupil voice, the school council and decisions pupils help to shape. We evidence understanding through pupil work, council records and pupil voice.

The rule of law. We teach why rules and laws exist and how they protect people, and we promote it through clear, fairly applied school rules and restorative conversations. We evidence understanding through pupil work, reflections and pupil voice.

Individual liberty. We teach that pupils have rights and can make safe, informed choices, and we promote it by supporting pupils to make choices about their learning, options and next steps. We evidence understanding through pupil work, option choices and pupil voice.

Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We teach pupils to respect and understand people whose faiths and beliefs differ from their own, and we promote it through assemblies, enrichment, visitors and the everyday culture of the school. We evidence understanding through pupil work, including religious education and PSHE work, and pupil voice. Tolerance here is specifically tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, not a general idea of respect.

At Highcroft School, we map these four values against our curriculum, assemblies, PSHE and relationships education, tutor time and trips, and we keep a triangulation pack that brings together where each value is taught, how it is promoted, and pupil work as evidence of understanding. The local mapping is recorded in the school annex.

Careers guidance

For pupils receiving secondary education, we provide access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is impartial, that enables pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of options, and that encourages them to fulfil their potential.

Evidence and triangulation

We keep a curriculum and SMSC evidence pack so we can show intent, implementation and impact at any time. This includes curriculum maps and schemes of work, the fundamental British values mapping, pupil work, pupil voice, assembly and enrichment records, and destinations data. Pupil work is our primary evidence and pupil voice supports it.

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5.3 Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

Pupil progress and curriculum delivery are recorded on Arbor and teachers record on a spreadsheet on our in-house tracking plan. alongside curriculum maps, schemes of work and the evidence pack. Leaders monitor through learning walks, observations, work scrutiny and data reviews, and report to the proprietor and governors on a termly basis, with a full curriculum review at least annually.

5.4 Equality and Inclusion

At Highcroft School, this policy is applied fairly and without discrimination, in line with the Equality Act 2010. Every pupil is entitled to a curriculum that meets their needs and aspirations, including those with an EHC plan. We adapt planning, resources and teaching to remove barriers, and we monitor curriculum access and outcomes for different groups, acting swiftly to address any disadvantage. Curriculum content reflects diversity of culture, faith, family and ability, and promotes respect and inclusion.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Pupils

Engage with their learning, contribute to discussion, and treat staff and one another with respect, and take part in enrichment, tutor time and the wider life of the school.

6.2 Staff

Plan and deliver ambitious, adapted lessons that meet pupils' needs and follow the agreed schemes of work model the fundamental British values and SMSC through everyday relationships and language record pupil progress and keep the evidence that shows what pupils have learned and understood.

6.3 Leadership and the curriculum and SMSC lead

Leadership at Highcroft School sets the curriculum vision, makes sure the timetable gives statutory coverage, and quality-assures teaching through learning walks, observations and work scrutiny. The curriculum and SMSC lead oversees curriculum planning, SMSC provision and the active promotion of fundamental British values and keeps the evidence pack current.

Leaders will review curriculum access, participation and outcomes for pupils in alternative provision on the same basis as pupils educated on-site.

6.4 Governance

The proprietor and governors at Highcroft School hold the school to account for the quality and impact of the curriculum and for compliance with the Independent School Standards. They monitor through reports, visits and scrutiny of evidence, and provide challenge and support.

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6.5 Parents and carers

are kept informed about what their child is learning and are consulted where the standards require it, including on relationships and sex education, and support their child's learning, attendance and engagement with the wider life of the school.

6.6 Named leads

The named lead for the curriculum, SMSC and fundamental British values at Highcroft School are Stephanie Goddard and Christine Wade

7. Training Requirements

Curriculum, SMSC and fundamental British values are covered in staff induction at Highcroft School and refreshed at least annually. Subject and curriculum leads receive ongoing development so they remain expert in their areas and can support colleagues teaching outside their first specialism.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

9. Sources of Information / References

This policy reflects current statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, in particular Standard 2 on the quality of education provided through the curriculum, and Standard 5 on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Independent School Standards: guidance for independent schools (DfE, April 2026), in particular paragraphs 1.6 to 1.7, 1.52 to 1.53 and 2.3 to 2.10, including paragraph 2.7 on actively promoting each fundamental British value.
- Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (DfE, 2014).
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance (DfE, 2025, statutory from 1 September 2026).
- Section 78 of the Education Act 2002, which requires a balanced and broadly based curriculum.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- The schools we work with sit across different inspectorates. This policy is grounded in the underlying standards, which are common across them. Where the inspecting body needs to be named, our school is inspected by ISI.

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10. Version Control

This document can also be found in Radar. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The next review date and version history are recorded in the control table above. The named owner for review at Highcroft School is the headteacher.

11. Appendices

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11.1 Appendix A: School-Specific Annex

At Highcroft School, the following local arrangements apply:

- Curriculum and SMSC lead: Stephanie Goddard
- Curriculum map and pathways offered:

Curriculum Offer
We are pleased to offer a broad and inclusive curriculum designed to meet the diverse needs of our learners, with a focus on academic achievement, personal development, and life skills. Our programme is tailored to support students working towards nationally recognised qualifications, as well as internal awards that enhance engagement, confidence, and employability.

Core GCSE Subjects
We deliver full support and tuition for the following GCSE qualifications, with a focus on building core skills, exam readiness, and subject confidence:

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Biology
- GCSE Citizenship Studies

BTEC qualifications
Each subject is delivered in line with national curriculum specifications, and students are supported through differentiated learning, targeted intervention, and regular assessments to track progress and attainment.
Functional Skills – English & Maths
For learners not yet ready for GCSE or working at an alternative level, we offer:

- Functional Skills English (Entry Level 2 to Level 2)
- Functional Skills Mathematics (Entry 2 Level to Level 2)

These qualifications are ideal for developing practical literacy and numeracy in real-world contexts and can be tailored to meet the specific learning goals of each student.
Our internal awards programme offers learners opportunities to celebrate small-step achievements in:

- Attendance & punctuality
- Effort & behaviour
- Progress in core skills
- Engagement in enrichment activities

We also provide a broad enrichment programme, which may include creative arts, physical education, ICT skills, and social action projects, depending on individual interests and cohort needs.

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