



Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

INTRODUCTION

Promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development has always been central to Clifton College's curriculum.

The standard for the SMSC development of pupils is contained in the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2026 Paragraph 5 (see below). Guidance is offered in The Independent School Standards, Guidance for independent schools, updated 2026, Part 2.

5. *The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor—*
- (a) actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;*
 - (b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which—*
 - (i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;*
 - (ii) enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;*
 - (iii) encourage pupils to 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 in which the school is situated and to society more widely;*
 - (iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for 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 2010 Act; and*
 - (vii) encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England;*
 - (c) precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school; and*
 - (d) takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils—*
 - (i) while they are in attendance at the school,*
 - (ii) while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school, or*
 - (iii) 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.

DEFINITIONS

Spiritual Development - The definition of spiritual development is where pupils are reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, using their imagination creatively and developing curiosity in their learning.

Moral Development - Moral development is perhaps best thought of as 'ethics'. Simply put, it is the way children learn right from wrong. Ofsted defines moral development as being where 'pupils develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school'.

Social Development - Social development is more than the way our pupils behave in and around school; it is essentially about building relationships that enable them to appreciate their worth as members of society, whether that is the microcosm of the school or the wider context of society at large. These enabling relationships allow them to access cooperative learning, and to work and communicate with others collaboratively and not confrontationally. School should help its pupils to develop the social skills they need, both in school and in life.

Cultural Development - Cultural development means helping pupils to develop an understanding of their own culture and other cultures in their town, region and in the country as a whole.

Promoting pupils' cultural development is intimately linked with the school's attempts to value cultural diversity and prevent racism.

Clifton College believes that every pupil has something to contribute to society and to encourage this the College looks to nurture each individual as a member of the local, national and international community. This is done through rich academic and co-curricular provision, giving opportunities for every child to experience success and to develop within them the confidence, ambition and social awareness to be successful and happy in later life. The College aims to develop pupils who are equipped with:

- Intelligence and curiosity
- Creativity and innovation
- Integrity and honesty
- Resilience and enthusiasm to participate
- Moral courage and responsibility for their actions
- A sense of compassion and service
- An understanding of and respect for other people and the human condition

When pupils leave us they are well rounded, self-confident, highly employable and the best version of themselves that they can be.



This is achieved through an appropriate focus on the SMSC development of all its pupils.

Since SMSC is of central importance to a school and its pupils, then it follows that it should be led purposefully and not just hopefully.

Clifton College has three core values and behaviours that underpin our overall culture.

Integrity - We treat each other with kindness, sincerity and respect. We are liberal and open-minded, free from prejudice and pretension. **We strive to make a positive difference in everything we do.**

Spirit - We are determined to explore and develop what excites and motivates us, to fulfil our potential and realise our dreams. **We are curious, adventurous and intellectually agile.**

Resilience - We believe everyone should be empowered and supported to take risks. We are not afraid of setbacks. We learn from our successes and challenges. **We encourage bravery and, through reflection, build inner strength.**

BRITISH VALUES

Clifton College:

- Actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Ensures that principles are actively promoted which -
 - Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
 - Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
 - Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to lives of those living and working in the locality in which the College is situated and to society more widely;
 - Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
 - Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
 - Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010; and
 - Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England and the United Kingdom;
- Precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the College;



- Takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views;
 - While they are in attendance at the College;
 - While they are taking part in co-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the College;
 - In the promotion at the College, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the College or elsewhere;

Clifton College actively promotes the fundamental British values of:

- Democracy;
- The Rule of Law;
- Individual liberty;
- Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

The list below describes the understanding and knowledge expected of pupils as a result of College's meeting this part of the standard.

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety;
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence;
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected by law;
- An acceptance that people having different faiths and beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour;
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination.

Pupils are encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance at the College. Clifton College fosters an awareness of the tenets of all the principal religions represented in Great Britain. This teaching has a positive aspect, preparing pupils to interact easily with people of different cultures and faiths.

PRACTICE

- Academic lessons. Many subjects provide the opportunity for pupils to develop an awareness of and to experience SMSC education. For further details see subject handbooks.
- All at the College work hard to encourage a happy and positive atmosphere where there is a generosity of spirit and a willingness to be involved.



- All pupils up to and including Year 9 are taught RS, which introduces them to spiritual, moral and ethical issues as well as studying world religions.
- All pupils have PSHE lessons, and have the opportunity to hear from a wide range of visiting speakers on a variety of topics.
- All teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage pupils to behave according to the School Rules and to understand the principles of living successfully in a multi-culturally diverse community. The College draws from a large range of countries, faiths and beliefs and pupils are taught to respect and appreciate the views of others. Rewards are given to recognise and applaud those who contribute to the Community effectively at both House and School level. Weekly assemblies celebrate the various achievements of pupils.
- There are currently two parts of the Chaplaincy team: The Chaplain who leads the team and the Jewish life coordinator. The Chaplaincy seeks to support and enable spiritual development in the Clifton college community. Spirituality is the way in which we combine our thoughts and emotions to reflect, respond to, and seek to give meaning and purpose to the experiences that we encounter in life. We do this in many ways with the aim of providing and supporting all people irrespective of faith. For example, when we gather in the chapel each weekday, whilst it is not explicitly a Christian act of worship, it is worship; in which we seek to express values that all people can relate to, values like honesty, kindness, compassion, trust, justice and community. Jewish students are given the opportunity to come together in Synagogue three times a week to worship and explore traditions together.
- Throughout the year there are opportunities to engage, reflect upon and experience activities that help our community to grow in their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. These activities include, collective worship at Remembrance, Faith festivals, Holocaust Memorial Day, and Commemoration Day. Pupils are encouraged to see the Chapel as an inclusive place for quiet reflection. We also encourage students to attend other services for all faiths within the Bristol community. The Chaplaincy team holds a weekly drop in session for pupils, aimed at allowing discussion about any topic, religious or otherwise.
- Pupils in the Upper and Prep Schools all belong to a House with a dedicated house team who deliver the pastoral care needed to develop each pupil to achieve his/her potential. In the Upper School, each pupil also has a dedicated academic tutor who, along with the teachers, encourages all pupils to enjoy their academic studies and to strive for academic success. A senior tutor drives the content that should be delivered in the 1:1 tutor sessions for Year 9, 10 and 11 and the Head of Sixth Form with the Year 12 and Year 13 Senior Tutors. In the Preparatory School pupils are encouraged to cooperate with one another in pairs or small groups in the classroom, and are able to socialise across year groups in the playground, as well as at Forest School and after school clubs.



- Pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions and concerns both in and out of the classroom in a constructive way which promotes effective debate, understanding and tolerance. Upper School examples include: PSHE programme, the Academic Curriculum, Chapel talks led by pupils and staff, work with tutors, Junior and Senior Debating Competitions, opportunities to run their own activities and attend lectures, debates and talks, societies such as Philosophy and Law Society, Economics Society, Psychology Society, Scientific Society, History Society, Junior and Senior Scholars' programme; pupils write for the school newspaper giving opinions and reviews of school and world events. Annually there is an anonymous questionnaire based on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools which pupils fill in and which is discussed with Housemaster/mistress and Senior Leadership Team. Prep School examples include: pupil welfare survey, boarders' welfare survey, topical pupil-led assemblies and house meetings, diverse curricular enrichment programme. Pre-Prep examples include: circle time activities at which pupils express their views and have an impact on provision and decision making.
- All pupils are given the opportunity to participate in 'democracy in action', for example in House discussion groups, School Council, Big School Committee, Student Library Committee, Praepostors who meet weekly with the Deputy Head Co-curricular, Deputy Head Pastoral and the Head Master, International Committee, Model United Nations (pupils train with staff and then go off to conferences) mock elections, and to represent the views of the pupil body. The Prep School Council have redesigned all the Prep School ties which are now made from recycled plastic bottles and they have invested in a beehive cared for by pupils to produce honey.
- Clifton College wishes its pupils to fully understand why democracy is perceived within the UK as the fairest form of political organisation and to understand why taking part in democracy is to be encouraged.
- Pupils are supported to take on leadership roles both in the School and in the Houses, leading activities and encouraging others to get involved. Examples include; House and School Prefects (Praepostors), through CCF, D of E, Ten Tors, House Song, School drama, House Play Festival, art exhibitions at School and House level, House and School music, debating, House and School sport, House entertainment evenings. Some pupils set up and run their own societies e.g. Politics, Film and Philosophy Societies. Clifton in the Community was used as a forum to raise awareness of mental health issues which developed into a peer mentoring scheme for Sixth Form pupils. These pupils are all volunteers and are trained by a member of staff and the Lead Counsellor. They are available within each house to work with pupils. In the Prep School, senior pupils are given positions of responsibility such as Head and Deputy Head of House and Pupil School Council Representative. There are also opportunities for older pupils to act as 'pupil mentors' for younger children. In the Pre-Prep pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities and jobs which ensure the smooth running of classrooms.



- Through the Clifton in the Community (C in C), Charity work, Year 11 Business Enterprise programme and the CCF, pupils are made aware of the wider community and are given the opportunity to experience giving service to others. All pupils take part in sport on a regular basis and are encouraged to take part in the activity programme (it is compulsory for Years 9 and 10 to sign up for an activity beyond those already in the prescribed weekly commitments). The Prep School regularly reaches out to local primary schools and collaborates with them in events such as author visits, STEM days and, most recently, the Year 5 and 8 annual plays. Pupils in the Pre-Prep are encouraged to suggest charities they would like to support at regular fundraising events.
- Upper and Preparatory pupils are given careers advice and attend careers seminars. There is a dedicated careers team and 'Career hub' that is located in the Percival library. In the Prep and Pre-Prep, parents are welcomed to talk about their work, interests, customs and beliefs.
- House and departmental trips enable pupils to experience British culture (theatre, stately homes, galleries, museums, castles and historic sites, Kew Gardens, Eden Project etc) and the opportunity to take part in music, drama and sporting activities. The Pre-Prep has a programme of visits throughout the school year from music groups, puppeteers, authors, theatre groups to storytellers.
- Residential trips enhance the social, personal and emotional development of pupils, and provide opportunities for direct experience of other cultures.

A regular review of the planned curriculum, activity programmes and all policies is undertaken.