THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL GROUP LTD

Spiritual; Moral; Social and Cultural Development Policy

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Note: This policy has been developed and reviewed by The Alternative School Group Limited using internal expertise, professional judgement, current statutory guidance and appropriate digital tools. Final approval and responsibility for the policy rests with The Alternative School Group Limited.

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1. Purpose and Ethos

The Alternative School Group Ltd actively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a planned, coherent, inclusive curriculum, relationships, pastoral care, collective reflection and meaningful experiences in the community. We support pupils to develop self-knowledge, confidence, responsibility, empathy and the knowledge and skills to participate positively in modern Britain. This policy applies to all pupils and staff across the school's provisions.

2. Legal and Inspection Framework

This policy supports compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended), particularly Schedule paragraph 5 (SMSC), paragraph 2 (curriculum) and relevant welfare and leadership standards; the Equality Act 2010, including duties concerning discrimination and reasonable adjustments; the Children and Families Act 2014 and relevant SEND requirements; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; and the statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance effective September 2026. The proprietor must ensure the applicable standards are met in practice. ISI inspects association independent schools under its September 2026 framework.

3. Aims and Intended Outcomes

- Pupils develop self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and the ability to reflect on beliefs, feelings and experiences.
- Pupils distinguish right from wrong, respect civil and criminal law in England, take responsibility for their conduct and understand consequences.
- Pupils show initiative, contribute to their local community and develop respect for public institutions and services.
- Pupils respect their own and other cultures and the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- Pupils understand democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- All pupils, including those with SEND or EHC plans, can participate and demonstrate progress in accessible, individualised ways.

4. Delivery Across School Life

SMSC is embedded in curriculum plans, personal development/PSHE and age-appropriate RSHE, religious and worldview learning, literacy, creative work, tutor and pastoral sessions, assemblies or collective reflection, behaviour and restorative approaches, pupil voice, enrichment and community participation. Subject leaders identify planned opportunities, progression and assessment in their schemes of work; staff also respond sensitively to spontaneous learning opportunities. Staff use balanced, accurate and age-appropriate resources, adapting content to pupil maturity, communication and developmental needs.

5. Spiritual Development

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Provide opportunities for pupils to explore identity, values, purpose, awe and wonder, creativity, emotions, religious and non-religious worldviews, and reflective thinking. No pupil is required to profess a faith or belief. Examples include reflection journals, nature and arts experiences, discussion, mindfulness where appropriate, and exploration of diverse beliefs.

6. Moral Development

Teach ethical reasoning, the distinction between right and wrong, lawful behaviour, fairness, honesty, consequences, personal responsibility and repairing harm. Use supported discussion of moral dilemmas, restorative conversations and explicit teaching of respectful relationships, consent and boundaries as appropriate to age and stage.

7. Social Development

Teach communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, self-regulation, citizenship and community contribution. Facilitate pupil voice, shared decision-making, collaborative tasks, supported visits, volunteering where appropriate and preparation for adult life. Make accessible adjustments so pupils with communication, sensory, social or emotional needs can participate safely.

8. Cultural Development

Develop knowledge of pupils' own heritage and the cultural, religious and non-religious traditions of others, including local and wider communities. Use literature, arts, music, history, visits and respectful dialogue; challenge stereotypes and discrimination. Cultural learning must be meaningful and not confined.

9. Fundamental British Values

- Democracy: teach decision-making, voting, representation and how citizens influence decisions; provide accessible pupil voice and explain outcomes.
- Rule of law: explain school rules, rights, responsibilities, public services and why laws protect people.
- Individual liberty: support informed choices, rights, personal safety, autonomy and freedom of belief within the law.
- Mutual respect and tolerance: teach respectful disagreement, diversity of faiths and beliefs, and the rights and dignity of others.

Staff challenge discriminatory, extremist or anti-democratic conduct appropriately, with safeguarding escalation where necessary. Promotion means planned teaching and evidence of pupil understanding, not simply displaying values or holding one-off events.

10. Equality, SEND and Accessibility

The school prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and makes reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Teachers adapt communication, pace, sensory environments, resources, activities and methods of recording understanding; use EHC plan outcomes and individual support plans where applicable. Adjustments may include visual supports, assistive technology, alternative response modes, pre-teaching, supported group participation and structured reflection. Staff

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avoid assuming that limited verbal responses indicate limited understanding. Respectful discussion of protected characteristics is age-appropriate, legally accurate and safeguarding-aware.

11. Safeguarding, RSHE and Political Impartiality

SMSC complements, but does not replace, safeguarding, child protection, behaviour, anti-bullying, online safety, Prevent and RSHE policies. Staff follow Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and refer concerns promptly to the designated safeguarding lead. Preventative education addresses healthy relationships, consent, harmful behaviours, online risks, discrimination and how to seek help, consistent with the September 2026 RSHE guidance and the school's separate RSHE policy.

The school does not promote partisan political views in teaching. When political issues are raised during lessons, activities or school-promoted extracurricular provision, pupils receive a balanced presentation of opposing views, appropriate to their age and understanding. Staff distinguish established facts, legal rights and protected characteristics from contested political opinions.

12. Early Years Foundation Stage

Scope and statutory expectations. The school will implement the current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers (effective 1 September 2026), alongside applicable Independent School Standards. The EYFS learning and development, assessment, safeguarding and welfare requirements apply.

SMSC is woven through warm relationships, play, adult modelling, child-initiated and guided learning, routines, stories, songs, imaginative activities, outdoor experiences and carefully supported discussion. Teachers will not impose abstract or formalised SMSC lessons that are developmentally inappropriate. Children may explore their own beliefs and family experiences without being required to adopt a particular religious or non-religious viewpoint.

- Spiritual development: offer sensory exploration, nature, music, art, stories, quiet reflection and opportunities to express feelings, curiosity, identity and wonder, including through non-verbal communication.
- Moral development: model kindness, honesty, turn-taking, repairing harm and understanding the effect of actions; use simple, consistent boundaries and restorative, age-appropriate support rather than punitive or shaming approaches.
- Social development: support attachment and belonging, shared play, friendships, communication, cooperative problem-solving, emotional regulation and participation in classroom decisions.
- Cultural development: provide inclusive books, resources, celebrations, music and experiences reflecting diverse families, languages, disabilities, religions, cultures and communities, avoiding stereotypes and tokenism.

Fundamental British Values. Democracy is experienced through making choices, listening to others and taking turns; the rule of law through agreed, understandable rules that help keep everyone safe; individual liberty through supported choice and growing independence; and mutual respect and tolerance through inclusive play, learning about differences and respectful relationships. Adults challenge discriminatory language and behaviour sensitively and appropriately.

SEND, accessibility and specialist practice. Teachers will use a graduated, child-centred approach, reasonable adjustments, visual or augmentative communication, sensory supports, predictable routines and appropriately adapted environments. They will work with parents/carers, the SENDco, relevant

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professionals and placing bodies, and incorporate EHC plan provision and outcomes where applicable. Children will not be disadvantaged because they communicate, regulate emotions or participate differently.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

Leaders review curriculum maps, lesson and enrichment planning, work samples, pupil voice in accessible formats, observation, attendance and participation, behaviour and bullying patterns, safeguarding themes (without disclosing confidential details), parent/carer feedback and outcomes for pupils with SEND. They assess whether pupils can explain and apply concepts at an appropriate level, rather than relying solely on participation counts. Findings, strengths, gaps, actions, owners and deadlines are recorded in a termly review and reported to the proprietor at least annually.

Evidence may include: PSHE/RSHE planning; British Values examples with learning objectives; pupil voice records; SEND adaptations; enrichment logs; staff training; equality and anti-bullying actions; monitoring reports; and proprietor minutes. Evidence must be genuine, current and proportionate.

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