



St Columba's College

Pastoral Programme & Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy

This policy applies across the College at all age ranges including Early Years, Prep and Senior Schools.

St. Columba's College is conducted in the educational tradition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. As such the school community becomes a sanctuary for young people, a place where they feel protected and welcomed, a place where students sense the compassion which motivates those who care for them, and where they are known, valued, and treasured. We strive to create an atmosphere of understanding and generosity, which awakens in young people a sense of community and a desire to serve others.

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Section 1 Overview

This policy sets out the school's aims, principles and procedures for the delivery of Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Education and Citizenship. It reflects the values and philosophy of the College in relation to the teaching and learning of these elements. It gives a framework to which all staff, teaching and non-teaching, work giving guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with philosophical and theological planning documents of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in the development, delivery and assessment of the entire pastoral programme. In doing so it accords with and 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.

Section 2 Aims

An Education in Virtue: The Three Cs

The Pastoral Programme is based on the College's identification of the core values embedded in the "Three Cs". These have become central to the way in which we describe our community; the Cs have become shorthand for the kind of young person we wish each student to be, and for the kind of teacher or administrator we each hope to be. The three Cs are summed up in our College motto, "Cor ad cor loquitur". The holistic pastoral programme aims to find a way to live them out and to bring them to life in the classroom and community. In this way we seek to produce young people of character who are self-reliant, self-motivated, and exhibit self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils are actively encouraged to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understanding how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the community and to society more widely.

i. Courage

(Related: patience, positive risk-taking, diligence)

Courage is one of the four cardinal (core/key) virtues which often goes by the name of fortitude. In antiquity, courage was seen primarily as the virtue of the battlefield: a willingness to sacrifice one's own safety or life for the campaign. There are of course many battlefields we face on a day-to-day basis; personal and interior struggles, struggles with people and work.

ii. Courtesy

(Related: friendliness, thoughtfulness, kindness, generosity)

The foundation for courtesy is the dignity of and respect for the human person. Courtesy is the recognition that another person is made in the image and likeness of God. Courtesy seeks the good in another, and then acts in a manner consistent with that awareness—the awareness that the person in front of me has a destiny not yet fully revealed, but in the making. Courtesy is the entrance-level virtue that allows strangers to suddenly feel that they are kindred spirits. It is also the foundation on which other virtues might be established, such as kindness, thoughtfulness, friendliness, and generosity. No true and lasting human relationship can begin without the gateway virtue of courtesy. It appears at

the beginning of a relationship (we might even call it a relationship in itself) and abides throughout it.

iii. Compassion

(Related: pity, forgiveness, attentiveness, supportiveness, empathy)

We find many references in antiquity and in the early Church to the virtue of compassion. St Augustine, St Bernard, and St Teresa of Avila for example all talk about the essential nature of compassion not only for building up the community, but also for enabling us to be fully human. The virtue also appears many times in the Gospels. In the Gospel of Matthew for example, we read how Jesus was moved to compassion when he heals the sick or feeds the hungry crowds. As the name of the virtue suggests, compassion means to “suffer with” someone. But it is broader: the virtue does not simply come in to play when someone is going through a hard time (we can’t always see the inner struggles of others). Compassion is better understood as simply “being with” another, or accompanying them on their journey. There will be times when we are moved to pity for another’s obvious suffering. But on a day to day basis, compassion calls us simply to be alive and present to the experiences of those around us.

Charism & Ethos

The pastoral programme is based on a distinction between two key concepts: charism and ethos.

i. Charism

The word means ‘gift’. In Christian theology, charism refers to the specific gifts which God has given an individual or a community for the good of the whole Church. In our case, charism refers to the specific gift given to Father Coindre, and through him, to the Brothers of the Sacred Heart and those who work with them. That gift is to work with young people in a spirit of love and compassion.

ii. Ethos

The word means ‘character’. This is the visible evidence of the charism or the way in which the charism is lived out. For example, one might say that Father Coindre was given the charism to reach out to young people in Lyons in order to lead them out of poverty so that they might realise their full potential. In itself, this noble quality needs to be lived out in a concrete way in our own time: in the ethos. The ethos of St Columba’s College is a unique expression of the charism of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. It is how we live the gift of the charism. The ethos of Pieux-Secours in France in the 19th century will not be exactly the same as the ethos of St Columba’s College in the 21st century in every practical detail: the cultural context between our two worlds has changed. But the charism is the same because we are continuing the work of Father Coindre.

Section 3 Delivery

These core values and aims are delivered through the pastoral programme as follows:

Pastoral Tutor Period (PSHE/SMSC)

These periods are held twice a week in the Senior school. Periods are divided between assemblies, speakers and tutor/student-led activities and discussions, according to the Programme Overview Document, The Prep school follow a separate pastoral programme, overseen by the PSHE coordinator, and delivered by Form teachers in lessons throughout the week. The programme is supported by weekly assemblies. Both Prep and Senior programmes are reviewed and updated each year.

Liturgy

An education in spirituality, prayer and reflection is delivered through the liturgical and prayer life of the College. Through prayer and reflection, students are provided with an opportunity for inner-reflection and growth, in keeping with the aims of the programme.

Retreats

The College is committed to developing an effective retreat programme. This has been developed through a new model of day retreats incorporating creative workshops and reflections on Christian themes in the Sixth Form and teaching group day retreats on the subject of relationships in the light of "Imago Dei". Each year group have the opportunity to participate in a number of retreats during their time at the College. We have a stated aim to provide at least one retreat every two years per year group. Other opportunities for residential retreats are offered to students.

Catechetical Programmes

The RE department, in cooperation with the Ministry Team, runs a number of catechetical programmes throughout the week and year for various year groups. These include, retreats, prayer groups, Doves, Alpha, RE Ambassadors and 'The Good Place' Philosophy club.

Service Programme

The College has an extensive service programme (part of the SHAPE framework in the Senior School), and students are encouraged to participate at an age-appropriate level in the various House and College services available, including the following:

- a. CAFOD: the College is a strong supporter of CAFOD in the UK. Our CAFOD programme raises money and awareness through education programmes and guest speakers.
- b. Project Respond: The College has strong ties with its sister-schools in Zambia. An annual trip to Africa provides L6 students with an opportunity to assist and learn from these schools through this service programme.
- c. Recycling & Environment. The College has developed a recycling and environmental programme, that provides leadership opportunities for students
- d. CCF. Military service is understood to be a key element of national service, and the College supports a strong contingent of boys and girls engaged in the combined cadet force.
- e. Youth Ministry: Altar Serving, organisation of Liturgies.

- f. Buddying & Mentoring. 6th Form students have an opportunity to develop peer mentoring skills through buddying, and peer mentoring programmes in the College. In Prep, specific year groups act as Buddies at key transition points and all Prep Six pupils select and fulfil a monitor role throughout the year.
- g. Seasonal Projects. The service programme is not static and responds to issues and opportunities as they arise. Many of these initiatives are student-led.
- h. Houses. Much of the service programme is delivered through the House system. Each Senior House has its own service initiatives and supports its own charities.
- i. Student Voice (Student Council among them). The College strongly endorses student voice as a way to encourage students to develop leadership skills.

Current Affairs

The continued referencing of current affairs as part of the programme through assemblies, tutor periods, in discussion which also incorporates participation in mock elections, and the 'What in the World' programme in which students present on topical issues.

Section 4 Evaluation

Evaluation of the Pastoral Programme takes place each year through a consultation process with the Heads of House (Senior), the Pastoral Programme Co-ordinator & PSHE Coordinator (Prep), who participate in the management of the pastoral programme with CLT.

The purpose of the consultation process is:

- On the back of the inspection report, to develop a structure in which students take an active role in the management of PSHE/SMSC;
- To examine good practice in other schools in respect to structure;
- To update & drive programme forward in general.

Consultation process methods include:

- Meetings with the School Council
- Cross-year committees
- Online feedback
- Feedback from Heads of House
- Meeting/feedback from tutors
- Tutor/student sessions

The aims of the consultation process are:

- Consistency across Houses/tutor groups
- Ensuring high quality resources and coverage of all relevant topics, including those detailed in statutory guidance
- Management of programme by Pastoral Programme Co-ordinator
- Updating of delivery system
- Collation of resources

Section 5 Fundamental British Values

Rule of English Civil Law: The school's ethos and teaching, to include that of faith teaching, (see Overview Statement –Section 1) will uphold and support the rule of English civil and criminal law and students will be made aware of the differences and explore the relationship between the law of the land and religious law.

Other Cultures and Faiths: Students will be educated to respect their own culture and will be educated into an understanding, appreciation, regard and respect for other cultures and traditions and faiths in order to promote tolerance and harmony.

British Institutions and Services: through the curriculum, academic and pastoral and related activities students will be able to acquire a broad general knowledge of those institutions and services which come to define and serve the country.

Democracy: students will be educated to an understanding of why democracy is perceived within England as the fairest form of political organisation; to promote respect for democracy; understand why being involved and taking part in democracy is a good thing; and why law making on the basis of representation in Parliament is seen as better than alternative methods.

Political Indoctrination; the College will actively seek to prevent students being exposed to political indoctrination through the curriculum. This is not to say that political matters will not be discussed and debated, nor students exposed to political viewpoints but they will not be encouraged by staff or others (for instance external speakers) to support particular partisan political viewpoints. This accords with the Government's Prevent Strategy designed to prevent radicalisation of individuals.

Protected Characteristics; within the ethos of the school and manifest within the 3Cs, respect for the individual is a central feature of lived practice to include those defined under this category in the Equality Education Act 2010. (see appendices)

References

The Prevent Duty 2023

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils by regulations Sept 2014

Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools Nov 2014

The Independent School Standards: Guidance for Independent Schools April 2019

Appendix 1 Protected Characteristics

1. Age: A person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).
2. Disability: A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
3. Gender reassignment: The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

4. Marriage and civil partnership: In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. This will also be true in Scotland when the relevant legislation is brought into force. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).
5. Pregnancy and maternity: Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
6. Race: A group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.
7. Religion and belief: Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
8. Sex: A man or a woman.
9. Sexual orientation: Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.