

## National SMSC Quality Mark Verification Report

**Name of School:** Smithills School  
**Assistant Headteacher:** Justine Holman

**Headteacher:** Carolyn Dewse  
**SMSC Lead:** Louise Goldie

**Verification visit:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Dear Carolyn,

I am delighted to inform you that, following your recent verification visit, Smithills School has been awarded the **Gold** level of the National SMSC Quality Mark. This award has been formally confirmed by the Quality Assurance Panel.

I would like to offer special thanks to the staff, parents, and pupils for the very warm welcome I received during my virtual visit. The pupils I met spoke with pride about being part of Smithills School, and consistently demonstrated the school's values, which are clearly embedded in every aspect of school life.

They shared some of the wonderful SMSC opportunities available to them and spoke about how these experiences enrich their curriculum. Pupils were enthusiastic and articulate about their learning:

- “Culture Day is wonderful—we get to learn about each other.”
- “The School Council makes a difference, they improved the food in the canteen, and now we have a more diverse menu.”
- “Everyone belongs here. Our teachers really know us. They’re supportive and helpful.”
- “Session Zero lessons teach us things that help in the wider world. It was useful learning about credit and debt.”

Parents and governors also spoke with genuine pride and warmth about the school, frequently with huge smiles. They clearly value the school's approach to SMSC, and the emphasis placed on student wellbeing:

- “Staff are proud to work here; they all go above and beyond.”
- “The whole school, from the headteacher to the office staff cares deeply about the wellbeing of all pupils.”

I would also like to commend Louise for her ongoing passion and commitment to SMSC, which is reflected throughout the Smithills School community.

I was fortunate to receive a virtual tour of the school, led by a pupil, where many SMSC-related opportunities were highlighted. I particularly enjoyed seeing the variety of learning environments and hearing about plans inspired by student ideas. The work produced through Session Zero and Character for Education lessons is a testament to your commitment to giving every pupil a voice through creativity. These are rich, engaging opportunities that make a lasting impact.

Under strong and consistent leadership, it is clear that SMSC is at the heart of your school. Every staff member I spoke with demonstrated professionalism and confidence, sharing a unified vision for the school's future.

I congratulate Smithills School on the Gold standard of SMSC development that is offered to their pupils.

### **Key Strengths of SMSC Development:**

Based on your self-evaluation and our discussions, the following strengths stood out at a Gold level:

- **Pupil, Parent, Staff, and Governing Body Voice:**

All stakeholders could confidently articulate the breadth of SMSC opportunities, with pride and enthusiasm. Your core values are evident throughout, forming a strong foundation for the school's work. Governors play an active and visible role in school life, regularly collaborating with staff to enhance learning experiences.

- **Inclusion:**

Pupils are well-supported and encouraged to succeed. They frequently referred to the inclusive culture and the wide range of opportunities available. Your extensive and thoughtful curriculum provides access to enriching experiences, opening students' minds to the wider world.

- **Community Links:**

The school has built strong, positive connections within the community, such as hosting a Christmas party with pupils serving food, and regular performances by your excellent performing arts department. Your outreach, such as supporting families with prom dresses and uniform, further demonstrates a strong commitment to care and inclusion.

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### **Areas for Development:**

- Continue building relationships with wider agencies and local community organisations, such as Knife Angel and Fort Alice. During a Year 10 workshop, pupils expressed a desire for more awareness and guidance on staying safe outside of school.
- Explore additional ways to promote British Values across the curriculum and through pupil voice initiatives. Resources like Votes for Schools can help support rich discussion and debate, particularly on challenging or topical issues.
- Use the self-review tool as a live, working document to further embed SMSC across all areas of school life.
- Share the excellent SMSC practice at Smithills with other schools, showcasing your successful strategies and inspiring others.

Thank you once again for welcoming me into your school. The positive culture and ethos at Smithills School are truly infectious. It is clear why your pupils are proud to be part of the Smithills family.

**Verifier:** Abbie Underwood

**SMSC Quality Mark Manager:** Akasa Pradhan

Report issued and certificate awarded by Young Citizens. Please note that this award is recognised for 3 years.