



National SMSC Quality Mark Verification Report

Name of School: Smithills School
Headteacher: Michael Sidebottom

Verification visit: 21st September 2018
SMSC Lead: Louise Goldie

Dear Mr Sidebottom

I am delighted to inform you that as a result of the recent verification visit, Smithills School has been awarded Gold level of the National SMSC Quality Mark, and this has been confirmed by the Quality Assurance Panel.

I would like to offer particular thanks to the pupils who escorted me around the school and those who met me to discuss the numerous ways in which the school supports their SMSC development. They were very well informed about all aspects of SMSC and spoke highly of their teachers' enthusiasm and subject knowledge. They value in particular, the opportunities they are given to voice their opinions, listen and learn from each other and contribute to the development of the SMSC programme.

I would also like to congratulate Ms Goldie whose passion, commitment and professionalism, under your leadership, has enabled SMSC values and practices to be embedded right across the formal and informal curriculum, ensuring all pupils, regardless of their background can benefit academically and in their personal development.

I congratulate Smithills School on the Gold standard of SMSC development that is afforded their pupils; Young Citizens will be discussing with the school which aspects of their provision be shared with other schools.

Strengths of the school's SMSC development:

Through your self-assessment and our discussions, it evident that there are very many SMSC related strengths at Smithills; the following are a few key examples:

- SMSC is truly embedded across the school. Pupils value the opportunities they have in the Session Zero lessons to deepen their understanding of wider moral questions and global issues. Through the extensive performing arts programme and its links to the whole curriculum, pupils develop deep and meaningful cultural awareness, historical and contextual understandings, and empathy.
- The creative, pupil-led assessment of learning in Session Zero is a sight to behold! The range of poems, lyrics, artwork and performance pieces demonstrate a genuine engagement by the pupils with a wide range of PSHE and citizenship issues. SMSC is at the heart of the work of departments across the school. From the choice of texts in English literature to the 'Big Questions' in religious education and the popular GCSEs in citizenship and psychology, pupils are encouraged to become questioning and discerning young citizens. Pupils say they are unafraid to voice their opinions in lessons yet are mindful of the need to respect and protect each other's feelings. Pupils' SMSC development is further supported by citizenship and careers conferences, trips, visits, visitors and clubs to which all pupils are included.
- The largely pupil-led performing arts at Smithills are not only used to develop pupils' confidence and agency but are crucial to the swift and successful integration of the many International New Arrivals



(INAs) to the school. Through the extensive dance, music and drama programmes, supported by physical education, INAs make friends and are provided with an outlet to express their thoughts, fears and joys in a safe and supportive environment.

- The pupil voice goes way beyond representation on a student council. It is designed to be organic and non-elitist. The PSHE/citizenship content and delivery is discussed, evaluated and contributed to by pupils at all levels. Pupil voice is also an integral and supportive part of teachers' performance management.
- At Smithills it is understood that pupil wellbeing is underpinned by staff wellbeing. The trust and empowerment of the staff afforded by the leadership manifests itself in the trust and empowerment of pupils afforded by the teachers. Throughout my time at the school I heard the term 'family' being used to describe how staff and pupils felt about relationships in school and everyone I met was highly invested in its inclusive ethos.

Areas for development:

- The school's equality policy needs to include reference to sexual orientation and gender identity to be compliant with the 2010 Equality Act.
- The library would benefit from more reference books (for pupils and parents) that relate to PSHE topics.
- Ensure pupils have access to age-appropriate wellbeing helplines through cards, leaflets and on the school website.

Verifier: Janet Palmer

SMSC Quality Mark Manager Victoria Quijada

Please note that his award is recognised for 3 years and that re-verification should be sought by September 2021