

Lancashire SACRE
Meeting to be held on Monday 6 February 2012

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)

In judging the overall effectiveness of the school, as well as taking account of the four key judgements of achievement, teaching, behaviour and safety, and leadership and management, inspectors will evaluate how well the school is promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The grade descriptors for overall effectiveness place a high profile on the quality of SMSC. For example, for a school to be judged **good** would need to ensure: *'deliberate and effective action is taken to create a cohesive learning community by promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development'*.

SMSC stands alone as the key judgement relating to the wider aspect of pupils' personal development and incorporates areas such as Community Cohesion and Every Child Matters

This represents a significant change from the last Framework. The focus is now clearly not only on pupils' personal development but also on the **provision** the school makes to promote SMSC referring to *'providing positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum and through interactions with teachers and other adults'*.

The detailed wording is:

Inspectors must consider how well the school promotes all pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum and through interactions with teachers and other adults to:

- reflect on the experiences provided by the school, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning
- develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school
- take part in a range of activities requiring social skills
- gain a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training
- overcome barriers to their learning
- respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities, provided by the school, including, for example developing an appreciation of theatre, music and literature
- develop the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic, modern Britain
- understand and appreciate the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life

From the *Evaluation schedule of the inspection of maintained schools and academies* (Ofsted 2011)

It is important to note that the promotion of **SMSC is a whole school, whole curriculum responsibility**. RE and worship can play a part but it should be seen in a very broad context. Schools are unlikely to be effective if they leave SMSC to just the RE department.

Spiritual development has a very distinctive flavour referring to pupils' ability to *'reflect on the experiences provided by the school, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning'*. There is a strong emphasis linking spiritual development to learning. It is clear that every subject can contribute positively to this.

There is also a very strong focus on pupils understanding cultural diversity within the school and further afield as *'an essential element of their preparation for life'*. **Again, RE can be a major, but not the only contributor.**

Adapted from a report given by Alan Brine HMI November 2011

Implications for Lancashire's RE

While remembering that SMSC is a whole school issue to be addressed by all areas of the curriculum, there is no doubt RE has much to contribute to this requirement. There is a clear opportunity to share good practice with other colleagues

Where can RE subject leaders go for guidance?

The 2011 Lancashire Syllabus for RE 'Searching for Meaning' has guidance on SMSC in the Support Materials section - Wider Curriculum

http://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/re-syllabus/index.php?category_id=58

RE Today has focused on this including an article by Alan Brine in the Autumn 2011 issue

Updated guidance is being written but the existing guidance used previously by Ofsted is still valid <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/promoting-and-evaluating-pupils-spiritual-moral-social-and-cultural-development>

The authority has a section about SMSC in the Lancashire Record of Self Evaluation (ROSE)

Other related issues

This year's Youth Conference will focus on SMSC

Planning for a marketed Primary Teachers of RE Conference will include SMSC [the last conference in 2011 had SMSC as its focus]

Possibly an area for Youth SACRE to consider?

HH January 2012