

SMSC Policy

Please note that updates have been written in red.

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Related Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Independent School Standards (England) Regulations 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Education Act 2002 • The Equality Act 2010 • The Prevent Duty (Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015) • Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 • Children and Social Work Act 2017

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Red Balloon of the Air (RBAir) places the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of its learners at the centre of its provision. RBAir's approach reflects its core values of **Unconditional Positive Regard, Mutual Respect, Inclusion and Collaboration**, aligns with statutory requirements, and our holistic ethos of meeting the needs of all our learners.

2. Introduction and Ethos

RBAir is a special educational provision offering a hybrid model of online and in-person sessions in a safe and supportive environment. We work with young people aged 11–20 (last admission at age 18) with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans who are unable to attend mainstream school, often due to disrupted educational journeys and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

Our ethos is built around supporting learners to **Engage and Rebuild** by accessing a broad and balanced curriculum, building academic confidence, improving social and emotional skills, and preparing for life as local, national and global citizens. A strong sense of community is fostered through trusting relationships, a commitment to inclusion, and promoting equality and diversity.

Feeling safe and heard is central to our approach. Learners are supported by a Link Mentor and have access to therapeutic support, helping them progress at their own pace in academic and personal development.

3. Legislation

- This policy is informed by the following legislative documents:
- The Independent School Standards (England) Regulations 2014
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2019
- The Education Act 2002
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Prevent Duty (Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

4. What is SMSC Development?

SMSC is the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of our learners. At RBAir, we foster this through:

- **Spiritual Development:** Enabling self-reflection, exploring beliefs and values, and encouraging the development of enjoyment, fascination, imagination and creativity in learning about themselves and the world around them.
- **Moral Development:** Encouraging learners to make ethical decisions, apply their understanding of right and wrong in their own lives whilst respecting the views of others, developing empathy and a sense of responsibility.
- **Social Development:** Building confidence and developing positive communication skills in a range of contexts, understanding and building healthy relationships, accepting and engaging with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.
- **Cultural Development:** Enabling learners to gain knowledge and respect for the cultural influences on their own and others' heritage, recognising and valuing the common threads running through the range of diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and socio-economic groups in local, national and global communities. Encouraging engagement with artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities.

All elements are woven into every part of our provision, from the curriculum to the therapeutic support offered.

5. Vision for SMSC Development

At Red Balloon of the Air, we strive to nurture well-rounded individuals who are spiritually aware, morally responsible, socially engaged and culturally literate. Our SMSC development aims to foster a supportive environment where learners can explore their values, understand diverse perspectives and actively participate in their communities.

The promotion of SMSC aligns with our commitment to Unconditional Regard, Mutual Respect, Inclusion and Collaboration. This approach is integral to our mission of helping learners transition to adulthood with the academic qualifications, life skills, and emotional resilience they need.

We aim to support learners to **Engage and Rebuild** academically, emotionally and socially by:

- accessing a broad and balanced curriculum;
- gaining the academic confidence to obtain the qualifications needed for successful future transition;
- improving their communication and social skills;

- developing emotional resilience to be better equipped to manage everyday stress and situations;
- preparing for adulthood.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Leadership team:** Ensures that SMSC is embedded into the curriculum and daily activities, monitors its implementation, and confirms alignment with RBAir's values.
- **Trustees:** Oversee the effectiveness of SMSC provision and its impact on learner wellbeing and development.
- **Staff:** All staff are responsible for fostering SMSC development by modelling positive values, supporting learners' emotional and social growth, and actively participating in professional development to strengthen their understanding of SMSC.

7. Staff Expectations and Development

Staff are expected to:

- integrate SMSC into teaching and mentoring practices;
 - encourage teamwork across subject areas;
 - encourage learners to work together in different groups and situations;
 - support learners' emotional and social development through regular, structured interactions;
 - participate in training on safeguarding, mental health awareness, and diversity and inclusion to effectively support learners' emotional well-being, promote equality, and contribute to an inclusive environment that fosters SMSC development.
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- RBAir ensures that all staff receive appropriate training on SMSC and related areas to effectively support learners' development.

8. Provision for Staff Development and Training

Staff at RBAir receive ongoing training to ensure they understand and can implement SMSC principles. This includes:

- Regular updates on safeguarding and mental health support.
- Sessions focused on diversity, inclusion and promoting equality.

Professional development is part of a broader commitment to maintaining a high standard of care and learning for all learners.

9. Monitoring and Review

To ensure the continued effectiveness of SMSC provision at RBAir, we:

- regularly review learner progress in SMSC development through feedback and assessments;
- ask staff to regularly update the SMSC Matrix which shows where SMSC is embedded into subjects and provides evidence of its inclusion;
- will include SMSC focused questions in the annual RBAir learner and parent survey and use the feedback to inform development of the SMSC opportunities in the following year;
- review the SMSC policy annually to ensure it remains aligned with the needs of our learners and any updates to educational standards or legislation.

10. Why RBAir is Developing an SMSC Policy

While independent schools are required to promote SMSC development, there is no statutory requirement to have a written SMSC policy. However, we have chosen to implement this policy to:

- clearly outline how SMSC is embedded into our practice, ensuring a consistent and intentional approach that aligns with statutory expectations, including the promotion of British values and our ethos of holistic learner development;
- reflect our commitment to providing an education that supports academic, emotional and social growth;
- ensure SMSC is embedded consistently across all aspects of the learner experience;
- establish clear expectations for staff and leaders regarding SMSC development and the support of our learners.

11. Promotion of SMSC at RBAir

At RBAir, SMSC is an integral part of everything we do. We promote SMSC through the following:

- **Curriculum Delivery:** Lessons are tailored to support reflection, collaboration, and understanding of social and cultural issues.
- **Mentoring and Wellbeing:** Link Mentors provide personalised guidance and ensure each learner's needs are met.
- **Therapeutic Support:** Therapists create a safe space for learners to explore emotions and develop resilience.
- **Community Building:** Online and in-person sessions foster a sense of belonging, trust and inclusion.
- **Learner Voice:** Learners contribute to their education through a negotiated curriculum, allowing them to make choices and develop self-advocacy.

12. Promotion of British Values

At RBAir, the promotion of British values is integral to our SMSC provision. These values, which include democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are embedded throughout our curriculum and activities.

We promote these values by:

- encouraging learner participation in decision-making processes to understand democracy through collaborative learning and discussions;
- reinforcing the importance of laws and rules in both RBAir and the broader society;
- supporting individual liberty by encouraging learners to make informed choices within a safe and inclusive environment;
- promoting mutual respect through our emphasis on collaboration, diversity and understanding differences;
- fostering tolerance by teaching about various cultures, faiths and beliefs, celebrating diversity, and promoting the Rainbow Flag Award values.

11. Context and Challenges at RBAir

At RBAir, our learners often face additional challenges due to their SEMH needs and disrupted educational histories. SMSC development at RBAir takes these factors into account, offering flexible, personalised support to meet the unique needs of each learner. Our hybrid learning environment and small, supportive in-person groups allow us to tailor SMSC support in a way that fosters inclusivity, trust and emotional security.

12. Related Policies

This SMSC Policy should be read alongside the following related policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- PSHE Policy
- RSE Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Transitions Policy