



Policy for spiritual, moral, Social and Cultural Development -

Making the difference

Curriculum Policy:

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (Incorporating RSE and RE)



POLICY FOR SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Philosophy

At Vranch House we recognise the importance of constructing a firm foundation on which all aspects of education are built. It is our explicit aim to offer a good-quality education. All staff work together to create a caring environment, in which pupils can learn and grow in a healthy, balanced way. It is our belief that education is a route to spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development and, thus, the well-being of the individual.

Aims

At Vranch House we strive to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life through:

- ◆ guiding pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development – in particular distinguishing between right and wrong
- ◆ providing pupils with knowledge of, and insights into, values and beliefs
- ◆ enabling them to reflect on their experiences in a way that enhances their self-knowledge and spiritual awareness
- ◆ broadening their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of their own beliefs and cultures and those of others
- ◆ developing pupils' integrity
- ◆ helping them to be responsible, caring citizens, with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities
- ◆ promoting equal opportunities
- ◆ fostering pupils' self-esteem and emotional well-being
- ◆ the formation of worthwhile, satisfying and lasting relationships based on respect for others and themselves
- ◆ enabling pupils to respond to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and cope with change and adversity.

The school ethos, VIEW Curriculum, effective relationships throughout the school and curricular activities all make a significant contribution to the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Spiritual & Cultural Development

The teaching of what was formerly referred to as '*Religious Education*' at Vranch House has been rolled into the VIEW Curriculum to engender an understanding of the distinctive nature of religion and the contribution of religious and spiritual insights to the meaning of life. Our pupils begin to know and understand the traditions and beliefs of Christianity and other faiths, so that they may discover the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities, and attitudes that they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material well-being. During their time at Vranch House, pupils will be given the opportunity to visit different places of worship including Exeter's synagogue and mosque (where permission is granted) and respectfully explore artefacts and items of religious significance to a wide range of major world religions.

In order that pupils acquire an understanding and respect for traditions, including those of their own culture, Vranch House initiates a wide range of sensory and experience-based activities. Multi-cultural celebrations throughout the year, such as Diwali, Easter and Chinese New Year, recognise the diversity within our society and pupils study the wide range of traditions and beliefs represented within our World. Every opportunity for our pupils to experience traditional foods, clothes, music and art from different religions and cultures around the world will be explored; in this way pupils can meaningfully share aspects of their cultural/religion with peers and the school as a whole.

By openly sharing and engaging positive and respectfully with religions and cultures of the world as described above, pupils learn to recognise and accept the differences between individuals in our multi-cultural society; covering a number of fundamental British Values: '*Individual Liberty*', '*Mutual respect*' and '*Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs*'

Moral Development

Pupils' understanding of '*life in modern Britain*' (including British Values), the differences between right and wrong (including the '*Rule of Law*'), moral conflicts, and concern for others are promoted throughout all subjects and activities as appropriate. The moral development of the pupils is also promoted throughout the daily experiences delivered through the VIEW Curriculum, whether in lessons at the school or off-site in the community. The children are taught about making responsible and informed decisions, the consequences of their actions, and making personal choices as they grow up.

There is intentional overlap into safeguarding with all access to the internet being scaffolded to help pupils learn in a safe manner the potential, but also the risks posed by, search engines, social media and a wide range of websites.

Social Development

Pupils should be able to relate to, and work with, the adults who support them and their peers. At Vranch House School, we aim to enhance a child's ability to understand their rights and responsibilities within their families, school, and other communities. It is important that children develop a sense of belonging, a willingness to participate and to make an active contribution. In all lessons and activities, the children are encouraged to share, co-operate, and take an active role in decision making. They are also urged to act with courtesy and consideration for others. In these, and many other smaller ways, pupils are introduced to the British value of 'Democracy' by learning that their views and voice are equal to that of others and that all should have a say in decisions that affect society or a community.

Peer to peer interactions can be difficult for our pupils as many of them experience cognitive or sensory impairments that make initiating, maintaining (including mending break-downs in communication) and ending social contact extremely difficult. To meet this need and scaffold the acquisition of these social skills, the 'PLAY' area of learning was developed by our Specialist Speech and Language Therapist and one of our Occupational Therapist, in conjunction with input from our teaching staff. PLAY starts with early social awareness and builds skills to foster co-active play, co-operative play and imaginary play between peers.

The school maintains no fewer than two 'Pupil Ambassadors' (one male, one female) who are tasked with exemplifying the moral standards and work ethic we expect from our children and representing their peers when it comes to making decisions about provision at Vranch House. Our Pupil Ambassadors are encouraged to engage with local (or national) government initiatives such as 'Champions for Change', where they represent their peers in a much wider forum.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

The teaching of Relationships & Sex Education (RSE), in all schools in the UK, became compulsory from September 2019. The Head of Education responded to this statutory requirement national areas of focus by:

- producing a document to highlight how the Vranch House Individual Education and Wellbeing (VIEW) Curriculum addresses each of the Core Themes of the PSHE Association's programme of study for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education (as recommended by the Department for Education) – **See Appendix 1**
- Adopting the use of 'Sex Education and Sexuality for Very Special People' by Flo Longhorn (1997) in Vranch House for the teaching of Sex Education
- review of this policy (the SMSC Development policy) to incorporate RSE, British Values and RE

With regard to the Department for Education (DfE) publication '*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education*' (2021), the school took measures to ensure that RSE remains accessible for all pupils. Highly differentiated and personalised sex education is now threaded through the '*Personal Development*' domain within the VIEW curriculum. Staff at Vranch House are acutely aware that our pupils are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and other issues due to the unique nature of their needs and disabilities. Staff also recognise that RSE can be a particularly important subjects for pupils with Autism or other factors affecting their ability to interact socially or form relationships with peers. Such factors are taken into consideration in designing and teaching this subject as part of the VIEW curriculum.

RSE at Vranch House is tailored in content and teaching methods to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. As with all teaching and delivery of the VIEW curriculum, staff ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law

The school recognises and respects that Parents and Carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request the Head of Education will meet with parents/carers to discuss the request and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. In line with statutory requirements, it will be emphasised to parents/careers that there is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Revised: November 2024

Review: October 2026

References and documents used in creating this policy

Equality Act 2010 - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

DfE

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations, Part 2, 2014 f

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2014/3283/schedule/made>

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1090195/Relationships_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

Appendix 1

How the VIEW Curriculum correlates with the PSHE Association's recommended programme of work

PSHE Association core theme: 'Health & Wellbeing'

Communication & Cognition		Physical Development		Experience and Expression	
Emotional & Social advocacy	Physical Wellbeing	Working towards independence		Integrating the sense	Exploration and creativity

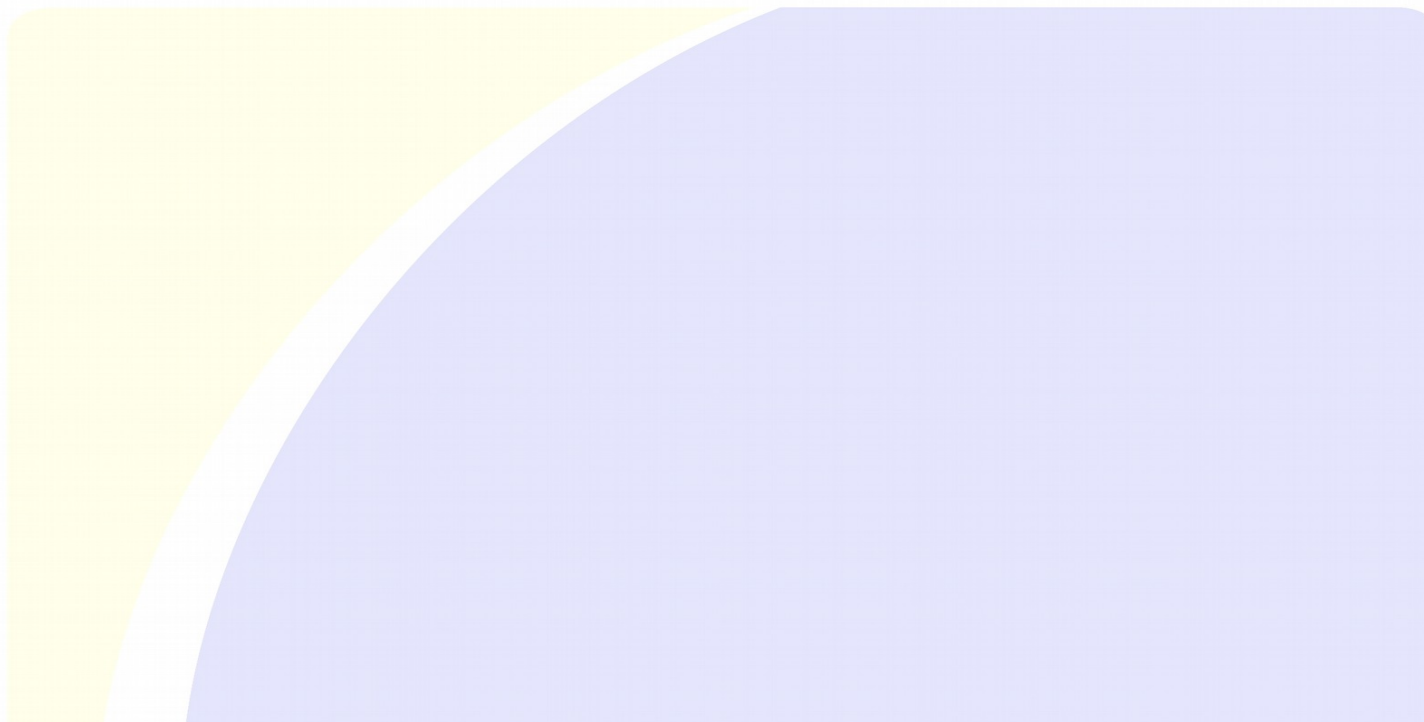


EMOTIONAL AWARENESS Expresses likes and dislikes by ▪ head motions ▪ body movements ▪ facial expressions ▪ eye pointing ▪ signing/symbols/photos ▪ VOCA/communication device Demonstrates an awareness of own self/other peers Identifies own emotion or emotion of other (person or photograph/ picture) Can attach reasons to emotions by ▪ signing ▪ indicating to symbols/photos ▪ use of VOCA/communication device IMPULSE CONTROL Can tolerate delayed gratification EMOTIONAL CONTROL AND SELF-MONITORING Calms in response to contact from familiar adult or stimuli Seeks comfort or reassurance when uncertain or upset Uses taught strategies to cope with frustration or other causes of stress/anxiety Demonstrates an ability to maintain a calm emotional state Expresses own emotions without aggression or withdrawal Can tolerate deviation from one aspect of a routine Can say how they are feeling about or how well they are performing a task	RECOGNISING AND EXPRESSING PAIN/ DISCOMFORT Deliberately gains the attention of an adult to indicate discomfort/ pain. PERSONAL NEEDS ROUTINES Deliberately gains the attention of an adult to highlight a need to use toilet/ start a changing routine. Deliberately gains the attention of an adult to highlight hunger/thirst.	ENGAGING WITH SAFE AND UNFAMILIAR PLACES Explores new environments with confidence. CONCEPT OF MONEY Engages in exchanges of object and trades with a peer or adult Engages in simple role play involving shops or other transactions Understands the exchange of money for goods in exchange OVERCOMING OBSTACLES Attempts to solve problem and overcome obstacle independently Perseveres with action if first attempt unsuccessful Seeks help when own best efforts are not sufficient to complete a task	PROPRIOCEPTION Reacts to contact from a familiar person Explores the environment for stimuli HEARING Responds to own name	ENGAGING WITH EXPERIENCES Uses all available senses to explore experiences Demonstrates shared attention Makes a choice or requests a preferred activity Exerts autonomy in various contexts EXPRESSION & BEING CREATIVE Makes a move or action that is spontaneous and relevant to activity
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PSHE Association core theme: 'Relationships'

Communication & Cognition		Physical Development		Experience and Expression	
Pre-intentional Communication	Intentional Communication	Emotional & Social advocacy	Working towards independence	Integrating the sense	Exploration and creativity
EXPRESSIVE (USING) Responds to greetings by: - changing facial expression - vocalising - providing eye contact - body movement/s Demonstrates like/want or dislike/rejection by - changing facial expression - vocalising - providing eye contact - manipulating the object - body movement/s	RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE (UNDERSTANDING) Indicates accurately to body parts when named. Attempts communication in familiar and unfamiliar settings Attempts communication with peers and adults Gains attention by using - eye pointing - signing/symbols/photos - VOCA/communication device Can split attention between stimuli and - another person - the task and more than one other stimuli/two stimuli Can maintain an interaction with an adult/ a peer Can extend an interaction with an adult / a peer Produces a consistent and accurate 'yes'/'no' response to simple questions	IMPULSE CONTROL Demonstrates respect for the personal space of others. EMOTIONAL CONTROL AND SELF-MONITORING Differentiates own response to familiar/unfamiliar people. PEOPLE PLAY Maintains attention to playing partner Redirects own attention to playing partner Demonstrates joint attention with adult Attempts to gain attention from adult/peer Responds to bids for attention from adult/peer Imitates playing partner's action Introduces new playing action Waits appropriately for turn Anticipates own turn Other-directed play act (Pupil acts on another person or lifelike object with a toy e.g. Pupil feeds doll, grooms dog)	ENGAGING WITH SAFE AND UNFAMILIAR PLACES Recognises 'strangers' and distinguishes these from familiar people Knows who are 'safe people' to approach for help in the community	PROPRIOCEPTION Can indicate named body part on own person Reacts to contact from a familiar person HEARING Looks at face/lips of person talking SENSORY INTEGRATION Focuses on person, object or stimulus UNDERSTANDING CAUSE & EFFECT Demonstrates intentionality in initiating a cause and effect event (Contingency Responding) when - making choices - interacting with others - taking-turns, awaiting own turn	ENGAGING WITH EXPERIENCES Demonstrates shared attention. Makes a choice or requests a preferred activity Exerts autonomy in various contexts EXPRESSION & BEING CREATIVE Anticipates the result of the actions of others e.g. noise made

Communication & Cognition		Physical Development		Experience and Expression	
Intentional Communication	Emotional & Social advocacy	Physical Wellbeing	Working towards independence	Integrating the sense	Exploration and creativity



EXPERSSIVE (USING) Asks/Responds to 'wh' questions accurately by using head motions/facial expressions/eye pointing/VOCA/communication device: 'what', 'where', 'when', 'why' Responds to 'how' questions Comments using verbal language or AAC	IMPULSE CONTROL Demonstrates an understanding of cause/action and effect/consequence Demonstrates consideration before acting Accepts that an activity, item or person is not available FLEXIBLE THINKING Demonstrates calm response to changes in routine/environment /staffing. PLANNING AND PRIORITISING Demonstrates a logical/pragmatic approach to completing tasks TASK INITIATION Is pro-active in deciding on a course of action Independently starts to execute own plan for completing an action ORGANISATION Demonstrates an ability to maintain attention on two elements of a task Can combine mental with physical processes (or like with like) to complete a task	ENDURANCE AND DEXTERITY Repeats an action when the first attempt is unsuccessful.	ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY Locates or avoids objects using sight, hearing, touch or vibration Independently moves in familiar, safe open spaces Traverse short, familiar route in a familiar, safe environment ENGAGING WITH SAFE AND UNFAMILIAR PLACES Seeks support or reassurance when feeling uncertain in a new environment Demonstrates hazard avoidance Knows who are 'safe people' to approach for help in the community CONCEPT OF MONEY Engages in exchanges of object and trades with a peer or adult Understands the exchange of money for goods in exchange Demonstrates an awareness that - coins/notes - bank and credit cards can be used to buy items Demonstrates an awareness that coins and notes have value OVERCOMING OBSTACLES Recognises an obstacle and stops action Attempts to solve problem and overcome obstacle independently Seeks help when own best efforts are not sufficient to complete a task	UNDERSTANDING CAUSE & EFFECT Demonstrates instigation and understanding of a cause and effect event (Contingency Awareness) when - making choices - interacting with others - taking-turns, awaiting own turn	EXPRESSION & BEING CREATIVE Demonstrates recognition of what to do for a familiar activity Makes a move or action that is spontaneous and relevant to activity Perseveres with action if first attempt unsuccessful Modifies action when repeating action does not work
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PSHE Association core theme: 'Living in the wider world'