British Values & SMSC Policy

Ethos Statement

TAO Independent School promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all learners, embedding the core British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These are not taught as abstract ideas, but lived through daily practice, relational consistency, outdoor therapeutic learning, and restorative community building.

Purpose

In our role as an Independent School, SMSC and British Values are embedded in both academic and therapeutic pathways, ensuring pupils excluded or disengaged from mainstream education have equitable access to cultural, moral, and civic development

This policy aligns with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Independent School Standards (Part 2 – Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development)

Principles

- To embed SMSC and British values within a trauma-informed, relationship-led curriculum.
- To support learners in understanding their rights, responsibilities, and values through experience.
- To build a setting culture that models inclusion, safety, fairness, and contribution.

How We Embed British Values & SMSC

Democracy

- Learner voice is central to all planning and provision.
- Choices and negotiated agreements are used in activities, timetabling, and routines.
- Team meetings and circle discussions model collaborative decision making.

Rule of Law

- Expectations are clear, co-created with pupils, and consistently applied.
- Restorative conversations replace punitive sanctions.
- Consequences are discussed through a relational lens, linked to safety and boundaries.

Individual Liberty

- Pupils are supported to express preferences, needs and opinions without fear.
- Learning Journeys and individual targets reflect personal interests, therapeutic needs, neurodiversity and individual starting points.
- Adventure-based learning encourages self-efficacy, confidence and autonomy.

Mutual Respect

- Boundaries are modelled by adults with compassion.
- Peer mentoring and group agreements support inclusive and respectful interactions.
- Daily reflection sessions encourage empathy and social understanding.

Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs

- Cultural celebrations and lived experiences are explored through outdoor learning.
- Nature-based spirituality, indigenous knowledge systems (e.g., Māori Te Whare Tapa Whā), and discussion of different worldviews are part of our regular delivery.
- No viewpoint is enforced, all are discussed with care, openness and critical thinking.

Curriculum Integration

- Learners engage with environmental ethics, social responsibility, conflict resolution, and wellbeing frameworks.
- Outdoor challenges (e.g., team canoeing, hiking, bushcraft) are framed to develop social skills, reflection, resilience, and shared responsibility.
- SMSC and British Values are explicitly mapped across the English, Mathematics, Science, PSHE, RSHE, Therapeutic and Outdoor Education Schemes of Work, ensuring consistent language, expectations and progression.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- SMSC development is tracked through session logs, daily reflections, and keyworker reports.
- Assessment for Learning strategies, reflective dialogue and professional judgement are used to monitor pupils' SMSC development, with outcomes informing planning, intervention and individual support

- Pupil voice and progress reviews include reflections on personal development and social learning.
- Staff receive information, guidance or training on SMSC, British Values and related safeguarding themes appropriate to their role, responsibilities and identified need.
- SMSC and British Values provision are monitored through the School's wider curriculum, safeguarding and quality-assurance arrangements, with significant themes or areas for development reported to the Headteacher and Proprietor as appropriate.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually, with pupil and staff input, and updated to reflect current social and cultural challenges, including those specific to SEND and trauma recovery.

Prevent Duty & Safeguarding Link

As part of our statutory duties under the Prevent strategy, TAO Independent School ensures that all staff:

- Receive Prevent awareness through safeguarding induction and updates appropriate to their role, responsibilities, identified need and changes in local or national risk.
- Are confident in discussing controversial issues in age-appropriate, sensitive ways.
- Know how to report Prevent-related concerns in line with our safeguarding procedures.
- Delivery of SMSC and British Values is underpinned by safeguarding practice, emotional safety and trusted relationships, ensuring pupils can explore sensitive themes without distress or risk

Our curriculum encourages open dialogue, critical thinking, and emotional literacy, reducing the risk of coercive influence and promoting a secure identity for each learner.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Prevent Policy, E-Safety Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, RHSE Policy and Equality, Diversity & Equal Opportunities Policy.

Evidence and Evaluation

TAO captures the impact of SMSC and British Values provision through:

- Daily session logs.
- Pupil progress journals and keyworker summaries.

- Visual documentation of activities (e.g. peer decision-making, cultural storytelling, group norms).
- Case studies or other qualitative evidence may be used where helpful to demonstrate individual development, participation and contribution.

This qualitative approach provides rich evidence of SMSC progress, personal development, and lived values valued by both families and professionals.

Legal & Statutory Framework

• Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended), including Part 2

• Equality Act 2010

• Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

• Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

• Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2023

• Human Rights Act 1998

• United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, where relevant

Version Updates

Version	Date	Author	Review / Changes	Approved By
2.0	09/09/26	Daniel Giblin	09/09/27	Headteacher / Proprietor