

Aims, Ethos & SMSC Policy

St James Senior Boys' School

AIMS

- To foster the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical development of boys as fully as possible.
- To develop open-hearted young men who will be able to lead full and useful lives in the service of others.
- To build good character by providing boys with moral and ethical values.
- To provide training in self-awareness, stillness and attention.
- To provide teachers who inspire the boys through the love of their subjects and the use of the finest material possible.

ETHOS

Background

St James was founded in 1975 by Leon MacLaren in order to provide an education that would nourish the whole human being. He believed that the highest aim of human life was the search for truth and that an education which provided for spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical development would bring fulfilment.

Philosophy

Practical philosophy lessons are provided once a week for all year groups. The focus in Years 7 and 8 is on service, character and self-awareness. In Years 9 – 11 philosophical, moral and religious themes are explored with a view to broadening the mind, considering moral and ethical questions and developing reason. Years 12 and 13 have their own programme of philosophical issues relevant to the practical needs of young men in society. Schemes of Work are available.

Quiet Time

There are two periods of Quiet Time every day. These are usually taken by the form teacher of each class after registration in the morning and in the afternoon. The whole school practises Quiet Time together in the Monday and Friday Assemblies. The main focus of these periods of quiet is to provide the boys with the opportunity to rest in the peace of the present by becoming still. Boys who have learnt to meditate practise during these periods, and those who wish to silently pray or practise any other spiritual method, are encouraged to do so. Boys are offered the opportunity to be initiated into the practice of mantra-based meditation at the School of Meditation should they so wish. Boys are also introduced to the .B Mindfulness programme in Year 7 and 9.

The Pause

A Pause is practised at the beginning and end of every lesson. The boys are asked to sit balanced and upright and to close their eyes. Keeping the body as still as possible, the mind is brought into the present, either by connecting with the senses or by watching the movements of the mind and allowing them to pass. After about a minute the teacher sounds a traditional dedication in Sanskrit which Years 7 and 8 repeat. The words are 'Om Paramatmane Nama', meaning 'to the Universal Self a bow'. This is followed by the Sanskrit word 'Atha' at the start and 'Iti' at the end of the activity. The idea is that the activity is offered as a service to the universe.

Assembly

Full school Assemblies are held twice a week and split assemblies (Lower, Senior and Sixth Form) once a week. A pause, dedication and traditional prayer are usually followed by an address by the Head, Quiet Time and then a hymn. British ethical and moral values are focused on.

SMSC

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is addressed constantly throughout the boys' entire education at St James. Boys are educated holistically, and the aim is that their education is connected and not compartmentalized. SMSC aspects are addressed by those items mentioned above, along with: Physical Education; Friday Options Programme; Activities Week trips to Europe; PSHE including speakers about drugs and sex education (see PSHE Policy); CCF and Duke of Edinburgh outdoor programmes; Music and Singing; Business Studies, STEM and Politics (MUN) events; Drama Events (often with our Girls' School); Debating; Clubs and Societies; along with topical events organized around recent events in the news.

Policy Written by: David Hipshon

Reviewed by: Headmaster and SMT
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Approved by:
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Date: