

# A BRILLIANT ME IN ACTION ONE PAGE GUIDE TO...

## SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

**SMSC** is a mandatory requirement for all schools in England to ensure pupils develop holistically. It is a thread that runs through the curriculum, ethos, and daily life of the school.

### WHAT?

- **Spiritual** – sense of self, identity, wonder, creativity, and reflection.
- **Moral** – understanding of right and wrong, fairness, and empathy.
- **Social** – relationships, cooperation, and contribution to community life.
- **Cultural** – appreciation of diversity, belonging, and respect for others’ values and traditions.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and **SMSC** are naturally interconnected: both aim to develop well-rounded, reflective, and compassionate individuals who can thrive personally and contribute positively to society. **SMSC** is central in the new Ofsted EIF.

Embedding **SMSC** through SEL supports:

### WHY?

- Emotional literacy and ethical decision-making.
- Respectful relationships and a sense of belonging.
- Empathy, kindness, and inclusion across differences.
- The moral and cultural awareness needed for life in modern Britain.
- The broader school mission to promote wellbeing, equality, and positive citizenship.

**SMSC** and SEL together create the foundation for British Values, character education, and whole-child development.

### SEL?

- Plan **SMSC** objectives alongside SEL competencies in curriculum design / everyday ethos.
- Use circle time, PSHE, assemblies, and reflective practices to explore values and emotions.
- Celebrate diversity through stories, art, music, and community projects.
- Create opportunities for empathy and perspective-taking (e.g., charity work, peer mentoring).
- Link moral and cultural reflection with emotional awareness (“How might that feel?”).
- Encourage spiritual moments of stillness, gratitude, and awe as part of emotional regulation.
- Use shared language across staff for social and moral learning (e.g., compassion, fairness, respect).

Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision-Making
<b>Spiritual</b>	<b>Spiritual + Moral</b>	<b>Social + Cultural</b>	<b>Social + Moral</b>	<b>Moral + Cultural</b>
Spiritual development supports a child’s sense of self, identity, reflection and meaning — core elements of self-awareness.	Spiritual grounding (reflection, calm) plus moral understanding (knowing right/wrong) support self-control, regulation and persistence.	Social awareness is about perspective-taking and empathy; cultural development broadens understanding of difference and belonging.	Relationship skills (communication, cooperation, conflict resolution) sit naturally with social competence and moral conduct (respect, fairness).	Understanding values and cultural context informs ethical choices and responsible civic behaviour.

### FIND OUT MORE

- [DfE Guidance: Promoting fundamental British values through SMSC. 2014](#)
- [Ofsted Inspection Toolkit \(Nov 2025\)](#)
- [SMSC in Education \(Votes for Schools\)](#)
- [Expanded SEL / SMSC Mapping](#)

### SEE ALSO

- British Values
- Empathy
- Values in Action
- Children’s Rights
- Rights Respecting Schools