



National SMSC Quality Mark Verification Report

Name of School: Castle Hill School
SMSC Lead: Dom Gregson

Principal: Steve Perren
Verification visit: 7th March 2025

Dear Mr. Perren,

Following the recent verification visit, Castle Hill School has been awarded the **Gold** level of the National SMSC Quality Mark for the third time, due to its exceptional commitment to student development. This has been confirmed by the Quality Assurance Panel.

Castle Hill School's dedication to fostering a strong, cohesive community identity is truly inspiring. The school's motto, "Innovating, Communicating, Empowering," is not just a slogan; it's a guiding principle that permeates every aspect of the school's culture. During the visit, numerous opportunities for students to cultivate these shared values were observed, along with the empowerment of staff at every level to develop them through the curriculum.

One of the most striking aspects of Castle Hill is its innovative and pioneering approach to communication. The school's communication strategies act as a golden thread, intricately woven through personalised teaching and learning, with SMSC and British Values at its heart. This unique approach enriches students' lives, increase their cultural capital and fosters their independence and life skills.

Gratitude is extended to the members of the teaching and support staff interviewed during the visit, as well as governors Jayne Askew and Katrina Whale and parents Jason Auguste and Erica Schofield. Their responses highlighted the school's supportive environment, dedicated to nurturing each student's potential and fostering a culture of success for all, whether it is a new word, a new skill or increased confidence in social situations.

Special thanks go to Mr. Gregson for his exceptional contributions in facilitating this day and meticulously compiling the evidence for the verification process. His dedication and commitment to Castle Hill School's SMSC curriculum are commendable. His strong leadership and commitment to embedding SMSC throughout the school are evident in his role as the school's SMSC champion. As a highly skilled and experienced practitioner, he provides invaluable guidance and support to staff, ensuring that SMSC remains a fundamental guiding principle in curriculum planning and delivery.

This commitment is reflected in the school's shared understanding of SMSC's role within the curriculum. The curriculum guides and audits championed by Mr. Gregson help to ensure that all staff members are aligned in their approach to promoting pupils' personal development, behaviour and attitudes. This shared understanding fosters a consistent and effective approach to SMSC across the school community.

Congratulations to Castle Hill School on achieving the Gold standard of SMSC development.

Strengths of the school's SMSC development:

Through your self-evaluation and discussions, it is evident that there are numerous SMSC-related strengths at Castle Hill School. The following are few key examples:

Areas of Strength

- Since the end of Covid restrictions, the school has been diligently rebuilding its programme of community-based activities and linking programmes, aimed at enriching students' lives and fostering a sense of belonging. These initiatives, such as the Art Project and Community Hub Activities, provide students with opportunities to develop essential social skills around SMSC and build strong relationships with their peers.
- Castle Hill School proudly demonstrates a strong commitment to the holistic development of its students through a robust and engaging SMSC programme. The school's carefully curated calendar of events, including workshops, community projects, cultural celebrations and guest speaker presentations, provides students with a rich tapestry of experiences that foster social responsibility, ethical awareness, cultural understanding and personal growth, designed to enrich their lives and add cultural capital.
- Castle Hill School prioritises the health and well-being of its students and staff, creating a supportive and nurturing environment. Through a holistic approach that integrates wellbeing into the curriculum, promotes physical activity and fosters mental health awareness, the school empowers students to thrive academically, emotionally and socially, through personalised learning. This commitment to well-being extends to staff, with professional development opportunities that ensure they are equipped to support students effectively. The school's dedication to the well-being of its entire community is a testament to its commitment to fostering a positive and enriching learning experience.

Areas for development:

- In discussions with the Principal and with parents, it was agreed that the school should build upon its outstanding efforts to develop students' understanding and appreciation of different cultures and religious faiths by fostering links by bringing in guest speakers from a broader range of faiths.
- Castle Hill School is dedicated to making sure that its students receive tailored guidance to prepare them for the workforce and provide comprehensive career advice. This could be further refined by additional monitoring of students' final education and career destinations in order to help review the existing outstanding provision.
- Castle Hill School is committed to fostering a vibrant tradition of extracurricular activities and community engagement that benefits students and the entire school community. To enhance this initiative, the school will implement a systematic monitoring process to collect data on participation rates and the effectiveness of these programs. This will enable the school to better understand the impact of these activities and make informed decisions to further enrich the student experience.
- Enhance the School Council's impact by fostering closer collaboration with Governors, including increased attendance at council meetings.

Report issued and certificate awarded by Young Citizens. Please note that this award is recognised for 3 years.