

National SMSC Quality Mark Verification Report

Name of School: Alvaston Infant and Nursery School
SMSC Lead: Mrs. Sarah Carnell

Headteacher: Miss. Molly Allen
Virtual verification visit: 15th July 2022

Dear Molly,

I am delighted to inform you that as a result of the recent verification visit, Alvaston Nursery and Infant School has been awarded **Gold** level of the National SMSC Quality Mark for the second time, and this has been confirmed by the Quality Assurance Panel.

Alvaston Nursery and Infants school is an oasis of kindness, respect and inclusion! Every member of the school community is valued, has a voice and is empowered to be their best. SMSC is the lifeblood of the school and runs throughout the curriculum, ethos and environment.

As Headteacher, you have been instrumental in creating a nurturing and encouraging environment for all members of the school community. With the support of other members of your Senior Leadership team, championed SMSC, and the wellbeing and welfare of pupils and staff- and this is evident through the positive comments, relationships and interactions.

The school's core values seamlessly weave through the everyday culture of the school and are embraced by all. Children can articulate values such as 'resilient rabbit' and 'creative chameleon' and the other aspects of SMSC including British values. Positive relationships are an underpinning pillar of the school and everyone talked openly about the strength of relationships exhibited and the school being a family that thrives together. A wide range of SMSC opportunities for learners are provided through the curriculum as well as additional opportunities such as the Forest Schools, fayres, the recent 'Intergenerational project', trips and clubs.

I would like to thank all of the children in nursery, reception, Y1 and Y2 who spoke to me. Children clearly enjoy being pupils at Alvaston. They informed me of a wide range of events and activities that they enjoy being involved in, especially trips such as; the zoo, the church and Newstead Abbey (being a particular favourite). Pupils show understanding of a range of cultures, how they show respect and kindness to others, as well as how they can look after themselves and stay safe. Children also talked about the importance of their own views and being able to learn about others, their perspectives and be tolerant and respectful of differences of opinion summed up by James (Y2) stating that, "Everyone has their own things and it is good for people to like different things!"

I would also like to thank Sarah Bonshor, the SMSC governor for speaking to me. Governors are both supportive and challenging of leaders in their aims for SMSC. As SMSC governor, Sarah was very knowledgeable about the provision within the school, the areas of strength and is committed to furthering the school's SMSC work, and like senior leaders, has high ambitions. It is clear that SMSC is an intrinsic part of the school, with Sarah commenting that "SMSC is a thread throughout all lessons and is developed and embraced across the school."

I would also like to thank the parents that I met today, Clare Baker, Collette Sticka, Sarah Woods and Rebecca Hall for speaking to me. Parents are highly supportive of the Head teacher, staff and the school. Parents spoke overwhelmingly about the strong sense of family and inclusion at the school. One parent commented that, "*Staff know every child well and embrace their strengths and interests, as well as developing them.*" Parents were very positive about the openness and transparency of school communications, which kept them well informed but also of being afforded opportunities to share their feedback, which is acted upon to bring about positive change.

I would also like to thank staff members spoken to (Tracy Darby, Rhiannon Wright, Ann Middleton) who echo their sense of pride in being part of the team at Alvaston. They speak highly of the school's supportive culture and its inclusivity. Staff share the vision and ambitions of leaders to enable every child to succeed and achieve, personally, socially, emotionally and academically and feel this is a strength of the school.

The SMSC lead, Sarah Carnall, is a fervent advocate for the development of SMSC at the school. She has ensured that recommendations from the previous visit have been considered and areas such as restorative conversations are now a natural part of everyday life. She is knowledgeable in her leadership and is well supported by you. SMSC is well embedded and cohesive across the school's culture.

I congratulate Alvaston Nursery and Infant School on the Gold standard of SMSC development that is afforded their pupils. Young Citizens will be in touch to discuss which aspects of your provision can be shared with other schools.

Strengths of the school's SMSC development:

Through your self-evaluation and our discussions, it is evident that there are numerous SMSC related strengths at Alvaston; the following are a few key examples:

- SMSC is seamlessly woven across the school, its curriculum and wider enrichment opportunities. There is a real buzz about the SMSC provision and it is a real asset of the school's. Young children are getting the best possible start through SMSC at Alvaston!
- The Headteacher has galvanised the school staff and community. Everyone I spoke to is proud to attend Alvaston Nursery and Infant School and are committed to making a difference to the children in the care.
- Leaders are celebrating the power of voice and ensure everyone feels empowered. This is a strength of the school.
- SMSC is well led by the Headteacher, SMSC lead and the SMSC governor. They are excellent examples of passionate and knowledgeable SMSC champions.
- Everyone is committed to wanting the best for the children and families at Alvaston. Staff work hard to build supportive, encouraging and nurturing relationships with their families, alongside having high ambitions, to enable all pupils to flourish. Staff take time to recognise individuals' interests, talents and strengths and build on these. This is highly valued by parents.
- Behaviour is another strength of the school. Staff recognise the importance of high-quality relationships in creating a positive behaviour culture and are taking the time to actively listen to pupils, understand the behaviour, triggers or issues and working with the pupils to enable them to problem solve. Children are thriving under this whole school climate of mutual respect, consistency and security.

Areas for development:

- Ensure children have an effective understanding of the school council, what it does and how it makes a difference in the school and have wider opportunities to be leaders.
- Children in Year 2, would benefit from developing an awareness of metacognitive / self-help strategies in learning, as children are quick to refer to asking for a teachers' help, as a first port of call.
- Consider adding to training and development opportunities for staff and the school such as staff mental health first aid training, 'Investors in Pupils' and sharing and collaborating with networks nationally such as in mental health and wellbeing.

Verifier: K. Hill

SMSC Quality Mark Manager: Victoria Quijada

Please note that this award is recognised for 3 years and that re-verification should be sought by July 2025