

## **An introduction to SMSC at the Thomas Hardye School**

### **Overview**

The Thomas Hardye School is based upon the moral purpose of education. It is through education that young lives are transformed and future opportunities opened up. The school is organised so that students are able to develop every aspect of themselves and also ensure that they are ready to make a full contribution to society.

Thomas Hardye has the status of a Rights Respecting School and Student Voice worked with the staff to build up key messages that are displayed in the school. The school makes sure that the students understand that prejudice will not be tolerated, with clear information given out on issues such as racism, homophobia, bullying and e-safety. The atmosphere of mutual respect is seen in the spirit of inclusion where all students, including those with particular physical or educational needs have a voice that is heard. The high standards of behaviour found in the school also help to prepare students for the expectations of society.

### **The Pastoral System and Student Voice**

Students have weekly assemblies and follow-up tutor time activities which promote the school's values as well as contemporary issues. Students are encouraged to take on positions of responsibility within their year groups, including tutor group representatives and sport captains. Inter-tutor group sports are both inclusive and competitive. The school also has a non-teaching Guidance Leader working in each year group to support students and ensure that all students are working in a spirit of co-operation. The tutor system, along with academic tutorials ensure that students are prepared for their place in society as well as academic excellence.

In the Sixth Form, the student union gives students an opportunity to contribute beyond the school. This has included taking a lead with campaigns for groups such as Fairtrade and Amnesty international.

### **Important Events**

One event that encapsulates the school's attitude towards developing the students understanding of the world is the Remembrance Service. Before the service each year group and the Sixth Form has an assembly exploring the meaning of Remembrance, both from a historical perspective and the ongoing sacrifices being made today. This builds to a service where all 2400 students of the school, along with the staff gather for two minutes silence and a service including the schools CCF which encourages all to reflect on the significance of the day.

Other events include the school hosting Holocaust Memorial Week and sending student representatives to Auschwitz. The Sixth Form hosted hustings for the European elections, encouraging students to engage with the democratic process, and the school also has students voting in the local youth parliament elections. Outside speakers contribute to the students' broader view of society. The schools carol concert, held at a local church is another inspirational event for students, staff and parents.

### **The Curriculum and PSHCE**

The curriculum at the Thomas Hardye School is broad and balanced, enabling all students to be successful and to move on to the next stage of education, employment or training. All students study Theology and Ethics to GCSE to develop students spiritual and cultural understanding along with exploring moral issues. PSHCE is also embedded in the school; this is through distinct lessons, off

timetable events and activities, outside speakers, and within subjects' schemes of work. For example, the maths department develops the students financial understanding and ICT promotes students understanding of e-safety. Subject areas will explicitly develop the students appreciation of the world around them. This would include Geography dealing with contemporary issues of poverty and economic development and Science linking to the research work going on at CERN.

All students are encouraged and enabled to study a language at KS4, and this helps to develop an appreciation of different cultures, including the opportunity for exchange visits. Performing arts is also an important part of the curriculum with students able to express themselves in a wide variety of specialisms.

The Sixth Form offers a large range of courses and the popularity of subjects such as Philosophy and Ethics, Politics and Law reflects the students' engagement with contemporary society. The EPQ also offers an opportunity for students to research and engage with contemporary issues beyond the scope of their programmes of study. Sixth Form sports leaders also run college competitions such as football, volleyball and rounders.

Students in all year groups experience learning related to the world of work, and local businesses work with the school to support students understanding of the world of work. This is achieved through 1:1 interviews, employer interactions and a wide range of careers talks which are on offer to students in Years 9-13.

### **Environment and Opportunities**

The Thomas Hardy School environment gives students a chance to reflect on a stimulating environment. There are sculptures around the site, as well as examples of art and photography throughout the school. The annual showcases for the Art department, and the Design and Technology department not only give students a chance to demonstrate their expertise, but also provide work for others to aspire too. There is a particularly large range of clubs. This includes opportunities to stretch the curriculum into more demanding areas such as STEM clubs as well as clubs that provide new interactions such as the Debate Club or Model UN or Japanese. Numerous trips develop the students experience and a small sample of these includes a trip to the WWI battlefields, a visit to the EU parliament, the opportunity to experience Shakespeare and other plays live on stage, visits to galleries and museums, and visits to science and engineering centres. Foreign trips can be particularly eye opening for students.

Students can also get involved with sport at all levels. There are opportunities to represent the school and tutor group and competitive success is celebrated, including those students who reach county, national, and international level.

### **The School Community**

The Thomas Hardy School is a place where staff and students achieve together. Through regular safeguarding training staff understand how to ensure children remain safe. Staff then provide the structure for the best possible range of student experiences. This includes everything that would be expected of an outstanding school but with the outcome of a distinctive Thomas Hardy student. It is the Student Voice who has worked with the management team to transform the canteen. The students provide gifts for the women's refuge and Hampers for charity at Christmas. Literacy and a love of reading is central to the school, with popular authors invited to talk to students, as literacy is central to students going on to be successful members of society. The school also organises and hosts lectures for the local community. These events regularly fill the school auditorium and see the

school reaching out to the wider community, involving others in social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.