



National SMSC Quality Mark Verification Report

Name of School: Firwood High School
Verification visit: 20th January 2022
Headteacher: Dawn Evans
SMSC Lead: Sally Martin

Dear Dawn and Sally,

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

I would like to offer particular thanks to Tia, Abdi, Mohammed, Jenny and Sally who showed me around school. They illustrated perfectly what your school does for its pupils in terms of personal growth, care and personalisation. Thanks are also due to Kate, Tejal, Heather and Pip who all gave their time so willingly to talk so passionately and emotionally about the life changing work your school does over the telephone, I very much appreciate the very personal accounts Kate and Tejal gave of how their children and families had been positively affected by the understanding and nurture that has had such a positive impact on their lives.

It was lovely to hear about how Firwood staff become 'family members' and how parents have been 'given their child back' after experiencing the care from your lovely school. I very much enjoyed hearing about the trustees reiterating the message that I had heard from the SLT, speaking proudly about how 'SMSC is inherent throughout all the practice of the school.'

My favourite part of the visit was being welcomed into your classrooms, talking to your staff and pupils and being looked after so well by Amy and Madison in Transition – the best brew, biscuit and service I have had all year! I also appreciate the time and effort from all members of SLT, Dawn, Jenny, David, Lyndon and Sally, in carrying out the self-evaluation tool, preparing an informative presentation and engaging in such interesting discussion with me.

Sally, the SLT and the whole staff team deserves a great deal of credit for the hard work they have put in ensure SMSC values are embedded throughout your provision and the equity of experience your pupils enjoy. They have obvious passion and drive and are rightly proud of the achievements of your school.

I thoroughly enjoyed the time spent at your beautiful school and would like to offer my personal thanks for accommodating me and for the exceptional work you do at Firwood High School.

I congratulate Firwood High 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, the wide range of evidence and discussions, it is clear that there are numerous SMSC related strengths at Firwood High School. The following are a few key examples:

- SMSC is completely embedded in the life, culture and learning of the school. It features strongly in all aspects of the pupils' personal and academic development. It is evident in the way staff and pupils talk about school, treat each other and their confidence to explore ideas that this is held in high regard.
- The total commitment of the staff and trustees to the students' development and the communication between the school and all the stakeholders that clearly demonstrates the sense of community, family and belonging.
- The strong focus on personal development and aspirations for every young person's future throughout every aspect of the school's work.

Areas for development:

- The further development of subject specialist rooms on completion of the building work to enhance the current curriculum offer.
- Finding even more opportunities to provide bespoke, personalised resources and experiences as the restrictions due to the pandemic are reduced and eased.
- Further developing the exciting curriculum model to create a student-centred programme driven by the needs and aspirations of the young people and that gives flexibility and enhances the skills and opportunities provided in a bespoke, personalised and meaningful way.

Verifier: Rachel Tomlinson

SMSC Quality Mark Manager: Victoria Quijada

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