

Case Study: Rosalind Brown-Jensen, Librarian, Allenbourn Middle School, Wimborne Academy Trust, Wimborne, Dorset (Years 5-8)

Developing Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) requirements across the school

This open-ended project responds to SMSC requirements, in 2 areas in particular. It has been developing over 2 years; Rosalind works with a range of teachers.

A. Broadening/maintaining an international outlook

i) Rosalind has been running cultural fortnights in the library in the Spring term (Chinese in 2017, Arabic in 2018, German projected for 2020); working with the Art department to develop creative activities and the interest of a number of teachers was helpful. For the Arabic fortnight, for instance:

- Arabic alphabets were circulated to tutors
- Children chose an Arabic name for themselves
- One display highlighted natural wonders of the Middle East, and another some of the thinkers and scientists from the Islamic Golden Age. A quiz with prizes encouraged students to look at the displays.
- Students drew abstract symmetrical tiles using their own names and played a Happy Families card game in Arabic.
- Students signed up to taste Arabic desserts.
- With their tutor, a Year 7 class learned the dabke, a traditional Middle Eastern wedding dance, and filmed themselves.
- The students communicated with Abassan Girls' Preparatory School in Gaza, via the British Council, and in answer to our questions, they told us about their favourite foods and authors, and what the most common first names in their families were.
- Rosalind wrote and sent a presentation of the most popular authors at the school. Display boards showed photos of the school in Gaza and some of the information they sent.

- Pupils with links to the culture being celebrated contribute to the fortnight. For example, a boy learning Chinese martial arts contributed to the display on Chinese culture.
- A boy who came to the Arabic meal talked to Rosalind afterwards about Urdu, his family's home language, which he hadn't discussed before.
- The student librarian team (13 pupils from Years 6-8) enjoyed leading the activities during the lunch hour.

ii) We have had visits from German and Swiss teachers in the past, but not as part of a reciprocal relationship. After conversations with Carmen Diment (CD), the French teacher, it was decided to develop a reciprocal link with Germany. (German is not taught at AMS, and Rosalind is currently the only German speaker on the staff.) CD and Rosalind were invited to the German Embassy's Sommerfest der deutschen Sprache and made useful contacts with Anglo-German organisations, particularly UK German Connection. In the Summer term 2019 the school received their first visit from a teacher at a school in Bavaria which was a good match for AMS, the Grund- und Mittelschule Deinigen. The requirement from the funding body was to develop a further project exchanging experiences between teachers, but Rosalind will continue to be involved. The school has several students with a German-speaking background; Rosalind will be involving them in the German fortnight scheduled for Spring 2020, e.g. teaching German phrases to their peers.

iii) The cultural fortnights have been a specific occasion for buying and promoting library resources, sometimes bilingual. An example is: Mileham, Rebecca, ed. 1001 Inventions and Awesome Facts from Muslim Civilization (National Geographic Society, Washington D.C. 2012).

B. Positive action to promote respect for and understanding of diversity

i) Refugees, migrants and migration.

In 2018 and 2019 Rosalind provided Refugee Week resources for KS3 staff in particular, from the official site www.refugeeweek.org.uk. Jane Jackson, Head of RE KS2 & 3 used the resources in class discussion. This year the Library had a display including the students' opinions from the discussions (around the question of whether Paddington Bear should be allowed to stay in the UK), and contributions from staff about migration in their own families (international or within the UK). The Library has lots of resources about refugees, including picture books; Rosalind promotes these both in the library and with the pastoral care team (from the point of view of building empathy through reading fiction). She identified excerpts from fiction books and autobiographies that could be read aloud by class tutors of each Year group to lead into discussion of past migration to the UK (e.g. the Windrush generation), and discussed them with Pippa Wheeler, our SMSC coordinator.

From September 2019 all Y7 tutors will read to their classes from *Ele Fountain's Boy* 87 (about a refugee's journey), one of the BookTrust selection in the 2019 School Library Pack, which Rosalind promoted at a staff meeting.

ii) Diversity and representation in the UK.

In 2017 Rosalind was asked to produce a presentation for KS3 about the development of the Commonwealth from the remains of the British Empire. This led her to personally reading about the legacy of the Empire in today's Britain. Recent lively discussion among publishers, writers, librarians and others about increasing representation of BAME leading characters in fiction has made her more aware of this issue. The Library already features fiction set in unusual locations: the Year 5 Book Group enjoyed Jess Butterworth's *Running on the Roof of the World*, set in Tibet, after which we made Tibetan prayer flags and found out about yaks. Last year the Y7 Carnegie Shadowing group read Marcus Sedgwick's *Saint Death* and played the Mexican card game which is central to the plot. There is also an increasing amount of fiction in translation (such as a version of Wu Cheng'en's *Journey to the West*).

However, Rosalind has made use of recently published surveys (such as that by BookTrust) to focus more on buying fiction which is by British BAME authors and/or has leading characters from diverse cultures and ethnic groups in the UK. Examples include *Planet Omar* by Zanib Mian and *Asha and the Spirit Bird* by Jasbinder Bilan. Some students will see their own home background reflected in these books whilst, at the same time, others will benefit from acquiring a broader empathy, so it is a win-win situation. Rosalind looks forward to introducing more students, particularly my Book Groups, to these books in the coming year.

The school website emphasizes the importance of SMSC across the curriculum: www.allenbourn.dorset.sch.uk/page/?title=SMSC&pid=92.

Official requirements for SMSC and British values include that students '*be equipped for living in modern Britain*': our students come from a predominantly white British, middle-class background. While they are comfortable with discussing issues such as gender equality and sexual identity, they often lack experience of diverse cultures and their presence in the UK.

Achieving the next SMSC Quality Mark is part of the School Development Plan 2018-19, see the table on the following page.

Objective What	Actions including CPD How	Time Scale	Resp Who	Interim milestones	Outcomes (Honest & realistic)	Monitoring	Resources Costs
2.2 To promote self-responsibility and respect for others as part of pupils' SMSC development	Ensure provision for SMSC is effective and that pupils understanding is being developed	Audit of SMSC provision (Autumn term 1) Benchmarking of provision against <u>kitemark</u> standards (Autumn term 2)	Pippa Wheeler All staff	Autumn 1: Staff CPD delivered regarding SMSC opportunities and mapping Autumn: Audit completed and areas of development identified Spring term: Evidence folder completed and <u>kitemark</u> applied for	School will be awarded SMSC <u>kitemark</u>	SMSC audit and <u>kitemark</u> application	Release time for PW, cost of verification for <u>kitemark</u> , meeting time/CPD time with staff

References:

A. Broadening/maintaining an international outlook

- 2017-18, Conversations with CD, lead French teacher, on the limited perspective of more of our students, and how to develop different international links
- www.britishcouncil.org/arabic-language-and-culture-education-pack
- Personal knowledge of Arabic language and MENA countries
- 2018-19, Conversations with CD about German exchange and future development
- www.ukgermanconnection.org/professionals-parents
- Personal knowledge of German and Germany.

B. Positive action to promote respect for and understanding of diversity

- Eddo-Lodge, Reni (2017) *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race*, London, UK: Bloomsbury.
- Hirsch, Afua (2018) *Brit(ish)*, London, UK: Vintage.
- CILIP (2018) CKG Diversity Review Final Report, www.cilip.org.uk/page/CKG-Diversity-Review-Final-Report.
- BookTrust (2019) *Breaking New Ground: Celebrating British Writers and Illustrators of Colour*, www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/booktrust-represents/.
- www.empathylab.uk/2019-read-for-empathy-collections
- Conversations with publishers, authors and other librarians at Building Identity, Building Readers, SLA/YLG Weekend Course, June 2019.

The school was awarded the Silver Quality Mark for SMSC provision in July 2019. Rosalind was timetabled in for the validator's visit and talked with her for 20 minutes, showing her library evidence and resources. The validator's 2-page report included the following paragraph: *"At the heart of the school is the Librarian. She is integral in encouraging respect for and understanding of diversity. She is not only ensuring a range of books from authors around the world are available and recommended to pupils, but she is ensuring pupils get a taste of other cultures through fortnights dedicated to specific countries; pupils are able to sample food, learn a little of the language, their writing and understand the faiths of the country. She is an absolute gem."*

Comments from staff:

"Our librarian has organised a series of activities based on different cultures, which have proved an invaluable 'way in' for pupils who might not be natural readers. For example - in Chinese and Arabic weeks we have explored calligraphy, tile designs, lanterns and a variety of ethnic foods. Children have benefited from this multi sensory and cross disciplinary approach and have expressed their enjoyment of these activities." - Pippa Martin, Head of Art.

"Thank you, Rosalind, for your support and enthusiasm shown by example, offering information and guidance especially with Refugee Week recently – with great interest from pupils in KS3! You are the go-to person who tirelessly researches and provides teaching/action/discussion resources. I agree that it is vital our pupils experience opportunities to discuss and understand the many cultural, language and religious differences in Britain and globally. I am delighted to add that Refugee Week will now be embedded for a second year in KS3 RE lessons as a direct result of your research and support. It gave pupils a better understanding of modern-day issues. Displays that are constantly updated in the library reflect all of these important opportunities and discussions and this again is thanks to you!" - Jane Jackson, Head of RE KS2 &3, RRS Lead Teacher, P4C Lead Teacher.

In order to maintain this initiative, Rosalind is planning other activities including:

- A continuing programme of cultural fortnights – after the German one Rosalind intends to look at the Indian subcontinent.
- Developing Refugee Week and Windrush Day focus.

- Moving towards the SMSC Gold Quality Mark. This will require embedding a global and multicultural outlook in all subjects and Rosalind looks forward to being involved in this.

Advice:

- Identify teaching staff interested and ready to work with you: broad collaboration is vital.
- Make use of your passions and those of your students.
- Be ready to have assumptions questioned and learn something new yourself.

Developing the school's teaching of SMSC has involved a broad range of actions, including cultural fortnights in the library, setting up a teacher exchange, and supporting discussion of migration and refugees.