



**SIR THOMAS BOTELER**  
**CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL**  
 THROUGH GOD, WE CARE



THE  
 CHALLENGE  
 ACADEMY  
 TRUST



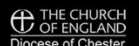
# BELONGING CHARTER

CREATING A CULTURE WHERE EVERY STUDENT  
 FEELS SEEN, SAFE AND SIGNIFICANT

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# BELONGING CHARTER

## CREATING A CULTURE WHERE EVERY STUDENT FEELS SEEN, SAFE AND SIGNIFICANT

### Vision Statement

**Through God, we care**—and through care, we create belonging.

At Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School, we believe that every student is a child of God, worthy of love, dignity, and purpose. Our commitment to belonging is rooted in our Christian values of Hope, Compassion, and Endurance:

- **Hope** inspires us to see the potential in every student and to build a future where all can thrive.
- **Compassion** moves us to create a school culture where every voice is heard, every story matters, and no one is left behind.
- **Endurance** strengthens us to walk alongside our students through challenges, ensuring they feel safe, supported, and never alone.

Belonging is not just a feeling; it's a promise. A promise that every student will be known, valued, and empowered to flourish academically, socially, and spiritually. In partnership with families, staff, and our wider community, we nurture a school where students attend not just because they must, but because they are drawn to a place where they truly belong.

### Why Belonging Matters

Research consistently shows that students who feel a sense of belonging:

- Attend school more regularly
- Perform better academically
- Exhibit stronger mental health and positive social behaviours
- Engage more deeply with peers, staff, and learning

Belonging is not bolt-on at Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School; it's a strategic imperative for inclusion, equity, and excellence.

# Whole-School Strategies

## A clear inclusive school identity

- Shared values that are visible, lived, and reinforced (not just displayed).
- Assemblies and events that celebrate diversity, achievements, and community.
- Staff consistently modelling respect and inclusion.

## Universal routines that make students feel safe

- Predictable start-of-day, corridor, and classroom routines.
- Clear behaviour expectations rooted in relationships rather than punishment.
- Staff visible during high-traffic times (greeting at doors, break duties, transitions).

## Teaching and Learning That Creates Belonging

We believe that students learn best when they feel known, welcomed and secure. Belonging in the classroom is not accidental; it is intentionally designed through strong relationships, thoughtful pedagogy and inclusive practice. Our approach to teaching and learning ensures that every student feels confident to engage, contribute and succeed. We achieve this via:

- A welcoming start to learning where students are greeted at the door
- High-quality teaching which rooted in deep knowledge of our students — their strengths, needs, interests and barriers to learning. Teachers use this knowledge to plan lessons that feel relevant, accessible, and affirming.
- Strategic classroom organisation where 'Messy Marking' seating plans are purposeful. This thoughtful organisation ensures that students feel safe, supported and able to learn free from unnecessary distraction.
- Our commitment to an *Access for All* approach, where learning is carefully structured through granular and gradual delivery. Concepts are broken down, modelled clearly and revisited regularly to ensure understanding for every student. Frequent checks for understanding allow teachers to adapt in the moment, ensuring no learner is left behind or overlooked.
- Calm, focused learning environments where our predictable structures support concentration, reduces anxiety and enables all students to engage fully in learning.

## Student voice that genuinely influences school life

- Active student council with meaningful contributions to whole school decisions
- Regular surveys and feedback loops ("You said, we did...").
- Student meetings with the Senior Leadership team

## Celebrations of success that are frequent and fair

- Multiple pathways to recognition: academic, attendance, kindness, improvement, effort.
- Public celebrations (assemblies, Head's Herald) and private recognition (postcards, calls home).

### **Flexible support options**

- Safe spaces for regulation and re-entry after dysregulation.
- Clear pathways for students to access help without stigma.

### **Focussed transition**

- We ensure every student experiences smooth, supported transitions—whether joining, moving year groups, or preparing for life beyond school, so they feel supported and confident at every stage

### **Consistent meet-and-greet routines**

- Staff at the door greeting with a smile, using names.
- Micro-check-ins for vulnerable students.

### **Normalising mistakes and encouraging contribution**

- Strategies can include “No hands up” questioning and mini whiteboards, where efforts are recognised
- Teachers praise risk-taking and effort, not just correct answers.

### **Representation in the curriculum**

- Texts, case studies, examples, and role models from diverse backgrounds.
- Opportunities for students to see themselves in what they learn.

### **Inclusive extracurricular culture**

- A wide range of clubs (academic, creative, physical, social).
- Proactive invitations for students who don't naturally join.

### **Welcoming physical environment**

- Classrooms, corridors, and communal spaces are well-presented, orderly, and cared for
- A whole-school culture exists where students and staff take responsibility for respecting and maintaining shared spaces.
- Students contribute to maintaining environments through roles (e.g., Student Ambassadors, Eco-Team)
- Adults model respect by consistently tidying, checking displays, and maintaining calm movement around school.

## **Partnership With Parents/Carers, Families, and Our Community**

At Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School, belonging extends far beyond the classroom, it is grounded in our shared identity as the *Boteler Family*. We believe that students flourish most when school and home work closely together, united in care, belief, and purpose. Every parent and carer is a valued and essential part of our community, and we are committed to building relationships that feel genuine, warm, and rooted in mutual trust. We achieve this through:

- Open and relational communication via regular updates, honest dialogue, and approachable staff who ensure every family feels welcomed, heard and connected.
- Collaborative decision-making, where there are meaningful opportunities for parents and carers to share their voice, shape school initiatives, and influence positive change.
- Family-centred events, which include coffee mornings, celebration evenings, parent forums, meeting with the headteacher where families can actively participate in school life.
- Community connections that enrich our students. This includes partnerships with churches, local groups and organisations who share our values and strengthen the support we offer.
- Shared responsibility for nurturing each child, with school and home working side by side to champion attendance, wellbeing, character, and academic success.
- Celebrating the diversity within our Boteler Family, honouring the cultures, stories, and backgrounds that enrich our community and deepen our sense of togetherness.

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural (SMSC) Development**

Our commitment to SMSC means that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not an add-on — it underpins how we teach, how we learn, and how we belong together. Through carefully planned curriculum content, reflective opportunities, collective worship, and meaningful dialogue, students explore who they are, what they value and how they relate to others in a diverse and changing world.

SMSC nurtures a sense of identity, purpose and belonging by enabling students to:

- reflect with confidence on their own beliefs and values in a supportive and respectful environment
- develop moral judgement and social awareness that strengthens community and mutual respect
- build strong relationships across cultures and contexts, celebrating diversity within our school family
- contribute positively to school life and the wider society as thoughtful, resilient citizens.

SMSC helps every young person feel that they belong, belong well and can flourish academically, socially and spiritually as part of the Boteler family.

At Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School, we are deeply committed to creating an environment where *every* student feels safe, valued, and proud to belong. Belonging is not left to chance; it is intentionally built through our culture, our curriculum, and the design of our spaces. Because we know that young people can sometimes feel uncertain, isolated, or disconnected, we have strategically employed specialist staff in key roles to notice early, act swiftly, and provide targeted support. If a student ever feels they do not belong, our systems and our staff ensure that this is identified immediately and addressed with care, dignity, and purpose. No child is unseen and no child is left to struggle alone.