

## **Statement on British Values**

In 2013 the Department for Education stated

“Keeping our children safe and ensuring schools prepare them for life in modern Britain could not be more important. This change is an important step towards ensuring we have a strong legal basis for intervening in those schools where this is an issue.”

“The vast majority of schools already promote British values. This is about making sure we have the tools we need to intervene if children are being let down.”

In November 2014 the DfE advised that all maintained schools are required to actively promote and not undermine “British Values.”

The British Values which the government has specified are:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

As a Catholic School we actively promote values, and virtues that shape our pupils' character and moral perspective, through the teachings of the Church.

We are confident that our Mission, Vision and Values which place God at the centre of everything that we do will give our pupils the necessary awareness and understanding of what it means to be a good citizen in Britain today.

Through our Religious Education, Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education, and through the spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning which we provide for our children as well as our promotion of The Common Good, we are able to make real links between the values of our pupils and the lives of others in their community, country and the world in general.

Through our rich and creative curriculum we teach about democracy, civic responsibility, rules and laws, equality, environmental awareness and understanding of other faiths.

### **Democracy – what do we do?**

- Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of, and promote respect for, public institutions and services
- Teach pupils how they can influence decision-making through the democratic process. We staged a mock election in May 2015 mirroring the debates and processes that took place in the real general election
- Encourage pupils to become involved in decision-making processes and ensure they are listened to in school – SCHOOL COUNCIL
- Organise visits to the local council and Parliament, and stage mock elections
- Run a debating society so pupils learn how to argue and defend points of view
- Help pupils to express their views
- Teach pupils how public services operate and how they are held to account
- Model how perceived injustice can be peacefully challenged

Pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard through our School Council and Pupil questionnaires

### **Rule of law – what do we do?**

- Ensure school rules and expectations are clear and fair
- Help pupils to distinguish right from wrong, emphasising that it is choices not children that can be identified as good or bad.
- Help pupils to respect the law and the basis on which it is made
- Help pupils to understand that living under the rule of law protects individuals and that important celebrations such as the anniversaries of VE day and Magna Carta are connected to this
- Develop restorative justice approaches to resolve conflicts

The importance of laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout the school day, as well as when dealing with behaviour and through school assemblies.

Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken.

### **Individual liberty – what do do?**

- Support pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour, as well as knowing their rights
- Model freedom of speech through pupil participation, while ensuring protection of vulnerable pupils and promoting critical analysis of evidence
- Challenge stereotypes
- Implement a strong anti-bullying culture

Within school, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for young pupils to make choices safely, through provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons. Whether it be through choice of challenge, of how they record, of participation in our extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, pupils are given the freedom to make choices.

### **Respect and tolerance – what do we do?**

- Promote respect for individual differences
- Help pupils to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, their own and other cultures and ways of life
- Challenge prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- Organise visits to places of worship, our own and those of other faith communities
- Develop links within our school community, within our own faith community and between ourselves and other faith communities
- Develop critical personal thinking skills
- Celebrate the differences between people and that which brings them together

We celebrate what makes us interesting to each other, our different backgrounds, the cultures and languages to which our children have access, the countries overseas with which our families have links. We have reading groups in home languages and an annual international food festival

We also celebrate what brings us together, living in London, a great world city, belonging to the UK, learning through English, and the Catholic faith.

We have theatre companies visiting to celebrate important events in the history of the UK and secure the children's knowledge of and pride in these. For our celebration of the anniversary of VE day, we had a street party in the playground.

On a more general level, the school undertakes assemblies which uphold traditional values of empathy, respect and tolerance. This together with a strong system of pastoral

care, where every child has a 'special person', promotes the self respect and self esteem of all our children, enabling them to connect their own self respect with respect for others and tolerance of differences.

"Bear with one another" says St Paul in his letter to the Ephesians. Formal RE lessons reinforce the need for tolerance and mutual respect as do the high standards of courtesy that we insist on throughout the school day.

The curriculum also focuses on OTHER FAITHS at particular times during the year when our pupils learn about Judaism and Islam, and learn about the importance of valuing and respecting those of all faiths and none.