



British Values and our Catholic Ethos

The government set out its definition of 'British values' in the 'Prevent Strategy' (2011), which was designed to prevent the extremism and religious radicalization of young people.

British values are considered by the present government to be democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

The promotion of 'British values' is central to Catholic education because British values have their origin in the Christian values of our nation.

At Sacred Heart RC Primary School we recognise, not only the importance of helping pupils to flourish academically but also emotionally, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, so they are fully prepared for life in British society and for their role as citizens, able to make the strongest possible contribution to the Common Good of all.

We teach the importance of British Values by going much deeper into the meaning of what it means to live a good life, within a framework of Catholic Christian Values. This provides the context and meaning for understanding why *British values* are important.

Our framework for understanding British values draws on the example of Jesus and his welcome and inclusion of all, which is developed in Catholic Social Teaching. At Sacred Heart we provide an education which focuses on the formation of the whole person and on our vocation and purpose in life. We are guided by our mission statement and by the Christian values of honourable purpose (that is, vocation and service), respect, compassion, co-operation and stewardship as we reflect on our place and purpose in the world. We place a significant emphasis on the celebration of individuality and difference within our communities and our calling to work for the Common Good, in the service of others. Our Catholic ethos, which includes explicit reference to Christian

and *British values*, makes a tangible difference to the way we work together and with our wider communities.

Within this framework it would be impossible to overlook the government's view of British values expressed as 'democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.' The examples that follow are an indication of some of the many ways we seek to embed *British values* at Sacred Heart RC Primary School.

The Rule of Law

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

The curriculum is designed to ensure pupils are taught the values and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken.

Visits from authorities such as the Police and Fire Service are regular parts of our learning programmes and help reinforce this message.

Individual Liberty

Within Sacred Heart RC Primary School pupils are actively encouraged to make independent choices knowing that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment.

As a school we educate and provide boundaries for pupils to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education.

We encourage pupils to see themselves as unique individuals able to make a unique contribution to building community.

Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights, responsibilities and personal freedoms and receive advice about how to exercise these safely, for example through our exploration of E-Safety in computing.

Mutual Respect

Respect is one of our school values and is modelled by pupils and staff alike.

The school promotes respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning environments as well as extra-curricular activities such as sport. In line with our commitment to democracy, pupils are always able to voice their opinions as we foster an environment where pupils can debate ideas and are safe to disagree with each other. We encourage pupils to substantiate opinions and to realise the value of co-operation and consensus as well as decision making through voting.

Our emphasis on fairness and justice means that we ask our pupils to ensure that they look out for those who might be disadvantaged. The school has taken a strong stance on social inclusion and anti-bullying through a focus on strategies to enable respect for difference through, for example, reflections on forms of bullying.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

This is achieved through equipping pupils with the ability to develop positive values, understand their own beliefs and their place in a culturally diverse society. We give our pupils opportunities to experience such diversity within the school community and within the wider community.

All pupils experience a connection with other cultures and beliefs through our RE, World Religions and Catholic Caritas in Action Programme, theme days and local, regional and international links. The emphasis on enterprise, working with others, and learning other languages directly contributes to the appreciation of others perspectives on life.

Our Religious Education curriculum follows the teaching of the Church in providing a broad and balanced education, which includes an understanding of and respect for people of other faiths or none and other religions, cultures and lifestyles.



