

Bethany School

Promoting Fundamental British Values Policy

June 2024

AIMS

This policy sets out the four key areas within which the DfE has defined British values, and the ways in which Bethany School pupils learn and develop understanding of these areas. We believe that our Christian Values, based on our beliefs about God and the Bible, equip us to provide a school where respect, tolerance and compassion for all underpins our whole curriculum, ethos, and way of working. Please see Appendix A “10 Christian Values” for further information.

INTRODUCTION

As of September 2014, the DfE requires all schools to promote the historical and current values that underpin the national identity known as being British. Within this, all schools are required to ensure that the curriculum actively promotes these fundamental British values. Bethany School is committed to supporting all students in learning about and deepening their understanding of British values, culture and systems.

Fundamental British values are defined by the DfE as:

- Democracy: Respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process
- The rule of law: Respect for the basis on which the law is made and applies in England
- Individual liberty: Support and respect for the liberties of all within the law
- Mutual respect and tolerance: Support for equality of opportunity for all and respect and tolerance of different faiths and religious and other beliefs

The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 for the new social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) standard came into force on 29 September 2014. [Independent School Standards - Guidance for independent schools - GOV.UK](#)

The regulations state that to meet the standard for the SMSC development of pupils, the proprietor of the independent school must:

- Actively promote the fundamental British values: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Prevent the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school
- Take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

The balanced presentation of opposing views applies while pupils are in attendance at school, while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities provided by, or on behalf of, the school, and in the promotion of those extra-curricular activities, whether they are taking place at the school or elsewhere.

Schools must also ensure they actively promote principles that:

- Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated, and to society more widely
- Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own cultures
- Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England

BRITISH VALUES: EXPECTATIONS FOR PUPILS

The DfE's non-statutory advice for improving the SMSC development in independent schools, academies and free schools, linked to above, has information on expectations for pupils.

Paragraph 13 of the document sets out 'the kinds of understanding and knowledge that can be expected in pupils' as a result of schools meeting the standard to respect 'fundamental British values,' these include:

- An understanding as to how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- An understanding that participation in elections by those opposed to democracy should be allowed by law, but the success of such candidates is undesirable for the well-being of society if it would lead to the end of democracy
- An understanding that bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account by the people, through the democratic organs of government
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law, and an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.

HOW WE ACTIVELY PROMOTE BRITISH VALUES

Democracy

- Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of and promote respect for public institutions and services through lessons, Tutor time, speaker events/family afternoon and Prayers.
- Use the Student Council (Pupil Voice) and other avenues, such as the pupil survey to teach pupils how they can influence decision making through democratic process
- Include information about the advantages and disadvantages of democracy and how it works in Britain and abroad through the Topic and history lessons and PSHE/World View Studies.
- Encourage students to be aware of injustice, perceived or real and think about ways in which this can be challenged through school processes or in the wider world through Charity Fundraising initiatives such as the Thanksgiving Service collection, Community service Family Afternoons and awareness raising campaigns.
- Use Prayers to explore themes relating to democracy in this country and around the world including from a Biblical perspective.

Rule of Law

- Ensure school rules and expectations are transparent, clear and fair, available for all to consult and that they are used consistently across the different areas and age groups within the school.
- Help pupils to distinguish right from wrong through discussion and modelling positive behaviour
- Build links between and understanding of the local constabulary and their work to support the local community through Police visits (Crucial Crew/Fire service visit and "People who help us" topic)
- Help pupils to understand that the law and living under the rule of law is intended to protect individuals. Use opportunities in lessons to review understanding of the rule of law and its effects upon individuals and groups.
- Help pupils to understand that the law is to be respected through upholding and adhering to it as a community and to our own school rules.
- Use curricular opportunities to explore the differences between civil, criminal and religious law as they pertain to British and other societies.

Individual Liberty

- Support all pupils to develop positive self-esteem, self-confidence and self-awareness and self-knowledge.
- Encourage pupils to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment.
- Encourage pupils to assume responsibility for their own behaviour and acknowledge the effects it may have on others.
- Challenge stereotypes and promote individuality at every opportunity, modelled by staff and older pupils to set positive examples throughout the school.

- Establish and maintain a climate in which all students feel safe and bullying is not tolerated
- Deliver a diverse speaker programme to expose pupils to people from a wide range of backgrounds and belief systems.
- Pupils are taught to understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised to exercise these safely through Tutor Time, E-Safety and Topic lessons

Respect and Tolerance

- As Christ's command to love one another is at the heart of our Christian Values, we promote respect for each individual and their differences.
- Use curricular opportunities to expose pupils to British and other cultures, their ways of life and faiths, encourage and support pupils in growing their understanding and respect for these.
- Specific teaching about other faiths, reinforcing the importance of respect and tolerance through Tutor Time, RS and PSHE.
- Use Assemblies, Prayers or Family Afternoon activities as a vehicle to understand different perspectives on faith.
- Encourage critical thinking and deeper understanding of difference and beliefs.
- Discuss differences between people: ethnicity, gender, faith, disability, sexuality and family situations such as young carers or looked after children ensuring that pupils can understand these different elements within British society.

SUMMARY

All staff and pupils at Bethany School are expected to behave with integrity, tolerance and compassion in their dealings with one another. We provide opportunities for all pupils not only to explore their own cultures but also to understand how these align with British values and how we can work together as a community for the greater good. Every member of the community has a part to play in enshrining the core values and beliefs so as to build a strong, united and democratic school. Where unfairness or bullying is found to exist it will be routed out, and we will actively challenge pupils, staff or parents who express opinions contrary to fundamental British values, including "Extremist" views.

Examples of opportunities and activities to promote British Values at Name of School include:

- British Values are promoted through visits to places of worship and local culture across Sheffield during family afternoon and school trips
- Speakers have included journalists, lawyers, charity workers, war veterans and missionaries: all of whom provide alternative views on British Values and encourage pupils to take an open and interested approach to the world around them.
- In lessons all students are encouraged to debate and discuss ideas, sharing and defending their beliefs in a way that is collaborative and supportive.
- Teachers model positive behaviour and democratic values in their interactions with colleagues and students.
- Prayers and Tutor times are frequently used as vehicles through which tutor groups are introduced to wider society with examples of key moments, people or ideas from British history.
- Bethany school marks nationally significant moments such as the coronation, remembrance day or national/international sporting events through services, family afternoon activities or one off special events.
- Bethany school participates in national awareness raising campaigns where appropriate such as anti-bullying week, world book day or online safety day.
- Lessons are exploited when appropriate to provide forums in which all students can learn more about and question the notions of liberty, justice, democracy, law, governance, faith and belief systems. We take care to ensure that all pupils feel safe, secure and able to celebrate their own and each other's backgrounds, beliefs and cultural practices.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF TO USE

The questions below can be used by staff within their schemes of work to demonstrate how they promote British values. The questions have been adapted from the DfE document 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools'.

How do we promote the values of democracy in lessons and wider school life?

How do we promote the importance of identifying and combating discrimination?

Do students understand that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law?

How do we promote tolerance between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of their own and other cultures?

Do students understand the difference between executive and judiciary systems?

Are pupils made aware of the difference between the law of the land and religious law?

How do we challenge opinions or behaviours that are contrary to fundamental British values?

Policy Adopted by Governors on: 10/06/2024

Policy Due for Review: 2028

Appendix A - Christian Values and British Values

At Bethany School we celebrate the good influence of Christianity on the development of British culture and the affinity between 'British Values' and 'Christian Values.' We believe that a Christian worldview provides a healthy underpinning for the four British Values defined by the DfE.

Democracy: We find support for Democracy in the biblical picture of humanity as created for interdependent relationships and in the mandate given at creation to humanity to develop culture and society in well-ordered, God-honouring ways (Genesis 1v26-28). Democracy is a way of holding authorities accountable to the people they govern and of dispersing political power, which accords with biblical teaching about humanity's frailty, finitude and fallibility.

Rule of Law: All of life is to be ruled in accordance with God's law, rooted in his perfect character but also discernible from the order of creation and expressed in the laws given to his people in the bible (Exodus 20 v 1-17, Romans 1v20). God delegates governance of society to human authorities, who are to make and enforce laws in accordance with and application of God's law. Christians are therefore called to respect the authorities that God has appointed (Romans 13v1-7). The rule of law is important for establishing the functional equality of all people, which is rooted in their equal dignity as those made in God's image (Genesis 1v26).

Individual Liberty: As part of their inherent dignity and value as created in God's image, the bible teaches that each person is individually responsible for their actions. Because all people are ultimately and directly accountable to God for their choices, there is a limit to how much human governing authorities should restrict the freedom of individuals.

Mutual respect and Tolerance: The biblical promise of a united and diverse redeemed humanity (Revelation 7v9-10) forms the basis for not simply respecting but celebrating cultural diversity in the present as an aspect of God's good created order. Likewise, the repeated command to love others (Mark 12v28-31) obliges Christians to not simply tolerate but to serve and care for those who believe and live differently from them. Such costly self-giving love is most clearly modelled in Christ himself (Romans 5v6-8).