



Promoting British Values at Syresham St James CE Primary School

The DfE have reinforced the need “to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs”. The Government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, and these values were reiterated in 2014.

The core of what the government asks schools to pay attention to is referred to as Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development in pupils (SMSC). In our own curriculum this mainly falls under Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), and Humanities, which incorporates Religious Education. In asking schools to promote British Values this document shows that if successfully addressing SMSC then it is very likely that a school is promoting these values.

The areas they refer to in the document, which we draw attention to below, give examples and descriptions of our approach.

Collective worship

We meet for collective worship 3 times a week. This takes place both in school and at the village Church and Chapel. In addition to this, every class uses their class assembly and hymn practice to reflect on the more implicit elements of spirituality and to continue to develop their relationships with their peers and the adults in school. We also provide explicit RE teaching across the school.

School ethos

We have a very strong set of Christian values driving the ethos of the school. Over the course of the school year, each value in turn becomes the focus for a term’s assemblies and collective worship. Collective worship is led by school staff, pupils, visitors to school and our Ethos Committee. This year we held a Values Week where children could reflect on and experience each of our school values. Pupils can talk with confidence about what the values mean to them and feedback on this project stated that we had furthered the children’s SMSC development. Our Ethos Committee members consist of children, staff and parents. They have considered and implemented ways in which we can make our collective worship better.

Effective relationships

Our pupils are organised in year groups. We provide a consistent team of adults to work with them across the whole year which supports the development of positive relationships. In Reception, at the very beginning of their school life, they choose a ‘Buddy’ from our Year 6 pupils. These relationships become strong friendships, valued by both the Reception and Year 6 children, helping to nurture confidence and trust from an early age.

Relevant activities beyond the classroom

We have a carefully structured range of activities taking children off-site, and we invest heavily in maintaining this and ensuring that it is always fully accessible to all pupils. This includes our residential visits to outbound activity centres.



Respect and tolerance for other faiths, races and cultures

We are able to successfully support the integration of children and families from any faith, race or culture to our school. This includes encouraging children to celebrate and share their own identity others. Within the classroom and around school we focus on a child's ability to acknowledge the presence of others, learning to share and take turns, and being encouraged to interact with the other children in their class, irrespective of that child's physical and intellectual needs, their race, religion, verbal skills, social background, sex, or any other aspect of possible difference. Along with explicit taught lessons about common elements of religions, our pupils are always picked up on any comments they might make or behaviours they demonstrate which indicate that they either hold prejudiced views, or may be exposed to such views. Our RE curriculum also includes visits and visitors related to a wide range of religions.

Understanding right and wrong and the rule of law

The importance of Laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced. Our pupils and students are taught about those behaviours which are acceptable and those which are not, and we have an established system to manage this. Moving beyond the everyday behaviour of the classroom, our lessons include learning about the purpose of organisations such as the Police. All children sign a behavior policy and e-safety code of conduct and our older children also make comparisons between our laws and that of other countries. In RE children consider fairness and justice and rules for life adhered to by different faith and non-faith groups. We also look at more aspects of right and wrong such as how to cope with some common problems such as arguments with a friend.

Democracy

Our School Council has been running for a number of years and they meet regularly to discuss items of interest, organise events and share ideas. The elections for School Council and other roles including the May King and Queen are based solely on pupil votes, reflecting our British electoral system and demonstrating democracy in action. This year we have taken the opportunity of the General Election to hold our own elections with children writing their own policy manifestos and every child being invited to vote.

We also use Pupil Voice to gather the children's views. This may be in the form of interviews or questionnaires. Every Friday in Celebration Assembly, the children celebrate the achievements of others and can recommend pupils for a head teacher's award.

We actively encourage pupils to make their own choices. This starts in Foundation Stage and continues into both key stages. We provide boundaries for our children to make choices within the planned curriculum.

Rights and responsibilities

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 our pupils to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. Our pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these safely; examples of this can be clearly seen in our e-safety and P.S.H.E. lessons. Whether it is through choice of challenge; of how they record; of participation in our numerous extra-curricular activities; our pupils are given the freedom to make choices.



Making a positive contribution

We promote the firm belief that each pupil is capable of making a unique contribution to the life of the school, their family and the community. We involve them in community events for example serving tea to local residents and sending our Harvest Festival donations to a local centre and in this way they can both understand the difference their contribution makes as well as showing their respect for others.

We work very hard with our pupils to develop their sense of self-esteem and a belief in their ability to achieve great things. Visitors frequently comment on how confident and well behaved our pupils are.

Knowledge and respect for public institutions and services

Respect is one of the core values of our school. The pupils know and understand that it is expected and imperative that respect is shown to everyone, whatever differences we may have and to everything, however big or small.

We run a Citizenship Award programme which covers areas including public services, road and water safety, politics at local and national levels, care for the environment, supporting the local community and personal safety. Through this children develop the skills to become informed, active and responsible citizens.

In all cases, our pupils and students are encouraged to see themselves as integral to the community, but within this community they have responsibilities as well as rights.

Combatting discrimination

Our pupils and students are given support from the adults in their class and the wider group of adults across the whole school, in order to help them learn that acting in a discriminatory manner towards others is not acceptable. Should a racial incident occur this, and how it was dealt with, must be reported to the Governing Body,

Our school ethos ensures that our staff model positive attitudes towards each other and to pupils, and that we provide praise and encouragement for the positive behaviour children demonstrate, while providing explicit plans to help pupils move away from more negative behaviour, whether those be of a social nature towards others, or simply inappropriate personal behaviour.

Sadly, it is possible that at some point in their lives, some of our children may become the victims of discrimination. It is important for them to develop a resilience and selfconfidence to manage situations where this may occur and along with a strong focus on developing their communication skills and independence.