

Promoting British Values in our School

The DfE have recently 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 have been reiterated by the Prime Minister this year. At St Giles Church of England Primary school these values are reinforced regularly and in the following ways:

Democracy:

Democracy is extensive within our school. Pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard through discussion and open forums within their classes; through brainstorming their ideas about what they would like to learn about a given topic; through our School and Eco Council; through our House system; through pupil conferencing interviews and through Pupil questionnaires. Our school behaviour system involves rewards (including house points)which the pupils are encouraged to nominate others for. Pupils are elected to leadership roles throughout the school and are encourage and enabled to lead clubs and worship, fund raising events and monitoring duties.

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 regular school days, as well as when dealing with behaviour and through school and class Collective Worship. 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. Visits from authorities such as the Police, Fire Service, Leaders from Secondary Schools and the Church, are regular items on our calendar and help reinforce this message. The children in Y5/6 complete a day’s workshop every other year to learn the importance the law in readiness for transition to secondary school and more independence through Act IV.

Individual Liberty:

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 of provision of a safe environment and empowering education and with the support of the strong foundations formed from our core values (responsibility, resourcefulness, resilience, respect, reflection and reasoning). Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these appropriately. We teach this through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons; our SEAL activities; and through our day to day conversations, expectations and modelling throughout the day. Pupils are given opportunities for choice through: choice of challenge within a lesson; choice of how they record; or choice of participation in our numerous extra-curricular clubs and opportunities. In our school we believe it is important to give pupils the freedom to make choices and to challenge themselves and take risks as part of their education and preparation for life.

Mutual Respect:

Part of our school ethos and behaviour policy has revolved around Core Values ‘Respect’ is one of these values, and pupils have been part of discussions and collective worship related to what this means and how it is shown. Displays around the school promote respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning rules, our daily conversations and expectations, and as our behaviour policy.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs:

This is achieved through enhancing pupils understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity. Collective worship and discussions involving prejudices and prejudice-based bullying have been followed and supported by learning in RE and PSHE. The school has a high-profile vocabulary around our core values which remain at the heart of all we do and how we behave so pupils understand their responsibility in respecting others. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school. Visitors from different faiths and cultures are invited into our school to share facts, beliefs and rituals with our pupils. Our pupils have visited other places of worship.

British Values and our Curriculum

At St Giles Church of England Primary School we value the diverse ethnic backgrounds of all pupils and families and undertake a variety of events and lessons to celebrate these. We have found this approach to be enriching for all parties as it teaches tolerance and respect for the differences in our community and the wider world. Underpinning all of these are a range of curriculum topics which have strong links to the British Empire.

In KS2, pupils have undertaken a topic about World War Two and the impact that the military had in fighting for the British Empire. This is linked with the annual Poppy Day celebrations where children purchase poppies and a minute's silence is held. A Remembrance Service is held in Church each year in order to teach the children to reflect on the occasion.

In KS1, there is a strong focus on the work of Florence Nightingale and how she assisted British soldiers in Scutari so they could convalesce after being injured. Florence Nightingale is seen as a role model by the children as they find her work and approach to making changes to hospitals both fascinating and inspiring.

In English lessons across the school we study the works of English writers and poets and spend time discussing the impact of their work on British society as a whole as well as at a personal level.

In History lessons we focus on important moments throughout British history and teach the events chronologically to the children in order for them to gain an understanding of how Britain came to be: from the early British settlers, to the British Empire and up to modern day Britain. The pupils learn about key and important figures throughout British history, for example leaders such as King Henry VIII, Queen Victoria and Winston Churchill; or inventors such as Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Alexander Graham Bell. Pupils learn how the lives of these key people, their deeds and accomplishments, impacted on the development of British society.

In PSHE lessons our pupils learn about and discuss our Government and Parliament, Democracy and our British laws. Cross-curricular links are made to engage the children further in their learning and encourage them to think and question. For example, year 5 and 6 debate various issues through Literacy, PSHE and RE thinking about how life in Britain would be different if events in history were changed such as the Roman invasion or World War II.

As a whole school, we have celebrated the Olympics, with Olympic themed sports days, given opportunities to learn about the history of Olympians in this country. Our Queen's Golden Jubilee was a huge event for the school, with parents invited to a 'street party' event held in the playground. Traditional children's party food was served to all! In 2016 we will be celebrating again with the country, the Queen's 90th birthday and supporting our Olympic team.

On a more general level, the school undertakes daily acts of collective worship which uphold traditional British Christian Values. These are also taught within formal SEAL, PSHE and RE lessons and on an informal nature throughout the school days. At St. Giles' we have 15 values which are: Openness, Loyalty, Courage, Happiness and Joy, Thankfulness, Faith, Forgiveness, Honesty, Commitment, Justice, Perseverance, Respect, Love and Unity and Hope.