

Promoting British Values at St Mary and St Benedict's Catholic Primary School

The Department for Education states that there is a 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 by the Prime Minister in 2014.

At St Mary and St Benedict's Catholic Primary School, these values are reinforced in the following ways:

As a Catholic School we actively promote values, virtues and ethics that shape our pupils' character and moral perspective, through the teachings of the Church. We are confident that our continued focus on the Gospel Values will give our pupils the necessary awareness of what it means to be a good citizen in Britain today, and embed in them the building blocks of a future successful and productive life. We believe through the teaching of our school curriculum, we promote tolerance, acceptance, peace, being non-judgmental, humility, justice, the dignity of each human being, forgiveness, generosity, fairness, discipline and hope.

Democracy

Democracy is embedded at our school. Pupils are always listened to by adults and are taught to listen carefully and with concern to each other, respecting the right of every individual to have their opinions and voices heard. Pupils also have the opportunity to air their opinions and ideas through our School Council and regular questionnaires. Elections for the Pupil Council are based on pupil votes, reflecting our British electoral system and demonstrating democracy in action. We also organise visits to the town hall and model how perceived injustice can be peacefully challenged e.g. by teaching about inspirational figures such as Ghandi, Mandela, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws, whether they are those that govern the school or the country, are consistently reinforced. Our school rules are deeply embedded in our work every day. As a school we discuss and display the three rights which are clearly understood by all and seen to be necessary to ensure that every pupil is able to learn in a safe and ordered environment. Our 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 etc. are regular parts of our diary and help reinforce this message. We help actively promote and model the rule of law by helping children to distinguish right from wrong e.g. by using the example of Christ when dealing with behaviour that is not acceptable. Details about school rewards and sanctions, choice and consequences are detailed in our Behaviour policy. (see download section of website)

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 the provision of a safe environment, an empowering education and a curriculum based upon clear Christian values. 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 PSHE lessons.

Mutual Respect

Respect is one of our core values and key to our school rules. Our pupils are fully involved in the review of our school rules and Mission statement and these are deeply embedded in all that we do at the 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. The core value of respect at St Mary and St Benedict's Catholic Primary School underpins our work every day both in and out of the classroom.

Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs

Our core value of respect ensures tolerance of those who have different faiths and beliefs. St Mary and St Benedict's Catholic Primary School enhances pupils' understanding of different faiths. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school and they enjoy this throughout the year and especially during our very popular annual multi-faith week.