



Promoting British values

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Promoting British Values at St John's RC 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 fundamental values have been reinforced in 2014.

Here at St John's we believe that these essential values underpin much of our work in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children and young people, and is entirely consistent with our mission as a faith school.

Democracy

Promoting the value of democracy takes many forms, within the formal and informal curriculum.

Pupils are encouraged from an early age to see themselves as having a voice which is listened to within the school. They work within their class groups to develop their own class rules. They elect classmates to participate in the Pupil Council, which meets regularly and which makes a significant contribution to the life of the school and decision making, even being involved in interviewing new staff. Pupils are regularly invited to put forward their views about the school.

All young people where appropriate and consistent with their level of understanding are taught about the democratic processes that operate within the UK, including through the PSHE curriculum. Topical political issues such as General Elections will inform discussions in class time or at assemblies. Where appropriate, pupils are also introduced to the types of alternatives to democratic government that exist in other parts of the world.

The Rule of Law

Here at St John's, pupils are taught about the importance of rules which protect us, and keep us safe and happy, and help us to get along with others. Through our explicit teaching and through our mission, pupils are encouraged in their awareness of right from wrong. They are encouraged to see that rules are there not to restrain us but to free us to become better and happier people.

In a school that caters for such a diverse range of ages and abilities, rules within classes and key stages may vary. But throughout all phases, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and their own behaviour.

Through PSHE lessons and informally throughout their interactions with staff and others, pupils learn about the laws of the land, and the roles of agencies such as courts and police. We are acutely conscious that some of our young people run the risk of entering the criminal justice system and we work with a range of agencies and partners to help them to help to develop safe behaviour.

Individual Liberty

At St John's pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, appropriate to their ability and level of understanding, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. We encourage pupils in the development of their self-confidence and self-belief, and to be assertive. We reinforce the belief that we all have rights and personal freedoms, and we demonstrate how to develop and exercise these safely, including in relation to e-safety, through the taught and implicit curriculum. As well as developing a sense of their own personal freedoms, pupils are also encouraged to view the impact they may have on others, including staff, family and peers.

Mutual Respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

We are in a unique position in that we are a Roman Catholic Special School, and Christ is at the heart of all we do. Our mission is to create a community of love and learning, and we are proud of the heritage of the founders of the school, The Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Notwithstanding this, we welcome young people from all faiths and from none. We encourage our non-Catholic pupils to be proud of their differing beliefs, and celebrate these within assemblies and at all opportunities. Our non-Catholic pupils take a full and active part in the liturgy and faith celebrations, in daily prayers and rituals. Equally we are sensitive to where pupils may be less comfortable with this. Pupils are taught about discrimination consistent with their level of understanding and how this is wrong.

Staff monitor carefully any indications of religious intolerance, including through our safeguarding policies. We are aware that some of your people may be vulnerable to negative influences and will tackle this rigorously.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn about people from different cultures and faiths including through our links with other countries and through celebrating the multicultural nature of our school family, both staff and pupils. We also encourage our young people to develop their sense of charity and care for others, locally and globally.

Through these aspects of our school practice, we believe that St John's is a happy and safe environment, in which children and young people can learn and grow, and contribute much to British Society