

Promoting British Values at St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

The DfE has 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. At St Matthew's Church of England Primary School British values are promoted in so much of what we do, not least through Collective Worship and our Religious Education, Citizenship and PSHE curriculum.

All that we do at St Matthew's is underpinned by our own School Values.



Throughout the school, British Values are promoted in a variety of ways. Below are just some aspects of school life that enable children to get a sense of these fundamentals as they move on through their time at school.

At St Matthew's we will actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views.

Democracy:

We have a School Council where two Class Council representatives from each class are elected to participate in Council meetings. These meetings provide a way for children's voices to be heard and for their opinions to influence important decisions made in the school. There are also numerous opportunities that are provided for children to exercise a vote whether it is choosing school team names or making more simple day-to-day choices.

We actively teach children about their rights and responsibilities as British Citizens; both on a national level and also a global level. This is underpinned through Collective Worship that often look at issues across the globe. We share examples of stories linked to democracy, discussing the challenges faced around the world and in history.

Mutual Respect

Respect is one of our core school values and is promoted in every aspect of what we do. We actively promote gender equality and teach the children about racial equality. Through Collective Worship, we look at key figures that have been part of the struggle to establish equality for all and examine where in our own country, as well as others, where inequality might still exist. We celebrate our differences and learn from each other about our differing faiths, beliefs and cultures. This helps to build understanding of different people and their belief systems that may hold both similarities and differences to our own.

We take opportunities to establish positive views of different groups in society and examples of this include our work during Black History Month and whole school celebrations such as 'Carnival' and 'Who am I?' Children are taught to respect others regardless of their individual differences. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated and is our approach to dealing with bullying incidents is enshrined in our Anti-Bullying policy. Some pupils carry out the role of 'play leader' at lunchtimes where they help to organise activities with other pupils in order to enable them to have enjoyable playtimes. This fosters a mutual respect between all parties across a range of ages.

Children are taught about how to develop respectful relationships in a wide variety of ways including through our Citizenship curriculum. We also promote mutual respect in the online world as set out in our ESafety and Acceptable Use policy. We continue to work in collaboration with local schools through 'YES Smethwick' which enables staff and pupils to work together to build community capital and achieve a common goal. The charity work that St Matthew's children participate in is extremely valuable in helping them to develop a respect for others whilst also supporting the development of their role as active citizens in the wider society. The School Council have a great deal of input into which charities we will support and plan their own activities to raise money.

Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

St Matthew's values of Faith, Respect, Choices and Learning Together form the foundation for learning tolerance. Through our Religious Education, PSHE and Citizenship curriculum, children develop a growing understanding of different cultures and beliefs and an appreciation that our differences should be celebrated. We believe that the more children learn about different faiths, the more likely they are to understand different people's motivations and feelings, thereby enabling them to be more tolerant of those cultures and beliefs that differ from their own.

Our Equalities Policy ensures that people of all religious beliefs, genders, ethnicities, abilities or any other differences are offered the same opportunities to thrive at our school. Equality is one of our values and something we seek to uphold in all of our work.

In assemblies, religious tolerance is strengthened through the celebration of different religious festivals such as Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christian celebrations. Sometimes, stories are shared or personal experiences of either the staff or children spoken about in order to develop a greater depth of understanding of religious identities.

Rule of Law

Through our curriculum, children are taught about how their individual choices can affect those around them. By encouraging children to take responsibility for their own choices, we are promoting the ownership of behaviour and adherence to the rule of law in wider society. Our 'Positive Behaviour Management' policy helps to ensure that children understand how to

behave in a positive way that helps to create a good learning environment. Our reward system of team points and raffle tickets reinforces this.

Children and parents receive home/school and Esafety agreements upon entering St Matthew's that set out the expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. These commitments mirror the expectations set by society and function as a set of rules to enable positive participation in school life.

Our work in Citizenship has been complemented through our Safeguarding day and other initiatives such as Safer Internet Day and Anti-bullying week. Working with the police, we invited agencies in from DECCA, Women's Aid, Rewind and Sandwell Anti-Social Behaviour team to talk to the children to explore the way in which the rule of law affects us all.

Our local PCSO regularly visits school to talk to the children, establishing good behaviour expectations for outside of school and also talking to the pupils about how to stay safe. This helps the children to see that there are police services to help uphold the law and to protect them.

Individual Liberty

Children are taught about rights and responsibilities through Collective Worship and also through our Religious Education, PSHE and Citizenship curriculum. St Matthew's values form the basis of our Collective Worship themes and individual liberty features strongly with key historical events and figures being celebrated. Children's achievements are celebrated in Praise Assembly to instil in them a sense of worth and create ambitious pupils who believe in themselves and their self-worth.

Children are taught about making 'good' choices and have a full understanding that they are the ones that make choices about how they act, whether those choices are well made or not. Children participate in groups that help to develop them as citizens. For example, the school Eco Team helps the school to improve its environment.

Individual liberty has School Values as its foundations. They help the children and staff to understand what the key features of a healthy positive environment are and enable individual freedoms to be maintained and respected. For example, the work around respecting different family models is essential to ensure that all individuals can come to school free from prejudice.

Our Citizenship programme allows staff in KS2 to focus on four key elements of citizenship: Developing confidence and responsibility, preparing to play an active role as citizens, leading healthy and safe lifestyles and developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.

At St Matthew's we strive to ensure that our pupils leave us with the strongest foundation of values upon which to build a successful life and make a successful contribution to our Society.