

Policy on British Values

Introduction

The government set out their definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy. These were reinforced in September 2014 due to recent events, and as of November 2014, schools must now promote them. Advice from the DfE is to do so through SMSC, though Ofsted will assess it through the curriculum too. These new regulations will sit alongside the requirements of the Equalities Act, which also applies to all types of school. Schools will be expected to focus on, and be able to show, how our work with pupils is effective in embedding fundamental British values.ⁱ

Promoting British values at Belgrave School

We agree with the Department for Education's five-part definition of British values:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

How this outworks in what we teachⁱⁱ

- Enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely
- enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation for and respect for their own and other cultures
- encourage respect for other people, and
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.
- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

At Belgrave School we desire that pupils will encounter these principles throughout everyday school life. The curriculum is mapped in detail across the whole school. Listed below are some examples of how we desire to promote these values in our school community:

Democracy

We aim that pupil voice will be significant in regards to life at Belgrave School. Our pupils elected to the School Council by their class peers and are involved in making the School a better place to learn. Ongoing staff interactions occur with pupils occur throughout the year and inform policy and practical decisions. We know that the formation of the School Council and the active participation of our pupils in informing decisions will sow the seeds for a more sophisticated understanding of democracy in the future.

We deliberately and specifically aim to use current news stories in the media concerning elections and politics to reinforce and show the importance of democracy.

As well as embedding the importance of democracy in the curriculum, we also emphasise it in our whole school assemblies. We see democracy as part of SMSC.

The Rule of Law

Our pupils will encounter rules and laws throughout their entire lives. We want our pupils to understand that whether these laws govern the class, the school, the neighbourhood or the country, they are set for good reasons and must be adhered to. This understanding of the importance of rules will be consistently reinforced through example, assemblies and our curriculum. The involvement of our pupils in discussion in the creation of the school rules helps them to understand the reasons behind the rules and the consequences if they are broken. We allow opportunity to debate and discuss the reasons for laws so that children can recognise the importance of these for their own protection. Throughout the year we welcome visits from members of the wider community including police, war veterans, the fire brigade and many more. We believe that clear explanations and real life stories emphasise the importance of the rule of law for our pupils.

Individual Liberty

We invest a great deal of time in creating a positive culture in our school, so that children develop in a safe environment where choices and freedoms are encouraged. In lessons, learning tasks are often left for the child to decide upon. We encourage children to choose the task that will challenge them, giving them more freedom to determine their own learning. We aim to educate children on their rights and personal freedoms as well as supporting them in recognising how to exercise these freedoms safely. At Belgrave School we believe that valuing choice and freedom in daily school life will foster a value for individual liberty as the children embark upon their adult lives.

Mutual respect

Mutual respect is at the core of our school life. Students learn to treat each other and staff with great respect. This is evident when walking around the School and in the classrooms. We specifically emphasise the importance of respect even when there may be a strong difference of opinion.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

At Belgrave School we offer a culturally rich and diverse curriculum in which all major religions are studied and respected. We strongly believe that tolerance is gained through knowledge and understanding. Through our curriculum and the routines of our daily school life, we strive to demonstrate tolerance and help children to become knowledgeable and understanding citizens who can build a better Britain for the future.

ⁱ This is non-statutory advice from the Department for Education: "Maintained schools have obligations under section 78 of the Education Act (2002) which requires schools, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society. This guidance relates specifically to the requirements to actively promote fundamental British values in schools and explains how this can be met through the general requirement in the 2002 Act." *Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools Departmental advice for maintained schools* p3, November 2014

ⁱⁱ Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values. Attempts to promote systems that undermine fundamental British values would be completely at odds with schools' duty to provide SMSC. The Teachers' Standards expect teachers to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school. This includes not undermining fundamental British values. *Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools Departmental advice for maintained schools* p5, November 2014