



Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

'Living and Learning in Faith'

British values

At Our Lady's Catholic Primary School we understand clearly our responsibility in preparing children for their next stage of education and for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life, laying the foundations so that they can take their place successfully in modern British society.

We promote a respect for and understanding of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles. We value the diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds of all our children and their families and we actively celebrate the similarities between communities whilst sensitively exploring any differences.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins everything that we do and it contributes directly to the quality of teaching and learning and the inclusive ethos of the school.

The Department for Education state 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 David Cameron in June 2014.

How well a school promotes such values is also an aspect of Ofsted's inspection process. Schools must (September 2014): *"ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles; and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain."*

At Our Lady's Catholic Primary School we recognise that we have a duty to prepare our children for life in modern Britain to take their place as active citizens in their local and national communities and also to keep them safe. The British values are:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

British values are promoted in so much of what we do, not least during our school assemblies, Religious Education and Personal, Health and Social Education sessions. The values are integral to our aims and vision where every child within the school is seen as an individual with something unique and positive to offer. Our aim is to guide each child to fulfil their potential in a structured, caring and stimulating environment in order to provide the best possible education for the children at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School.

We aim to ensure that the school is orderly and hardworking and that children are prepared through a rich broad and balanced curriculum for life in modern British society. Our values as expressed in the vision statement complement fully British values and always have done.

As well as actively promoting British values, the opposite also applies: we would actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British values, including 'extremist' views.

Children also learn about where Britain is in relation to the rest of Europe and other countries in the world.

Children find time travelling through history thoroughly enjoyable and a main focus is often British history. Through studying history, children learn about aspects of life during a period of time and how this has developed and changed through the ages. History topics may include inventions, discoveries, homes and medicines.

Democracy

At Our Lady's Catholic Primary School there are many opportunities for children, parents and staff to have their 'voice' heard. Democracy is central to how we operate.

We have an active School Council. The children who want to represent their class are selected by their peers through a process of making speeches and giving presentations to their peers and the whole school in a special assembly. The children consider the qualities which are important for an elected representative and describe why they have them.

The children on the School Council have real decisions to make. These have included choosing the type of playground equipment and the type of reading scheme books we have in school. They have met with the architects to put forward their ideas for a new building and regularly meet with governors. They act as ambassadors for the school and often help to show visitors around.

Children on the School Council also help decide which charities to support and how they will be supported.

Children 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. We encourage children to take ownership not only of our school but also of their own learning and progress. This encourages personal and social responsibility and is demonstrated daily by the children of our school.

Rules and laws

The importance of rules and laws, including those that govern our school or country, are referred to and reinforced regularly through assemblies and when reflecting on appropriate behaviour choices.

At the start of each school year, each class discusses reviews rules and responsibilities. This set of principles about school life clearly articulates what is expected of and from the children. The code is clearly understood by all and seen to be necessary to ensure that every class member is able to learn in a safe and ordered environment.

The Code

We always do our best to:

- treat everyone and everything with respect
- listen and follow instructions carefully
- be safe and sensible
- be responsible for our own actions

Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws. They understand that laws govern and protect us and understand the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when they are broken. These values are reinforced in different ways including visits from the police and fire service, during Religious Education when rules for different faiths are thought about and during other subjects where

there is respect and appreciation for different rules – in a PE lesson for example. Ground rules for discussions during PSHE and Relationships and Sex Education lessons (RSE) are also agreed

A Home School Agreement is also signed by children, parents and staff. This outlines the expectations placed on us all.

Individual liberty

Alongside rules and laws, we promote freedom of choice and the right to respectfully express views and beliefs. The children 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 children to make choices safely, through provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Children are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our E-Safety, PSHE and RSE lessons (such as those discussed in homophobia awareness sessions in Year 6). Whether it is through choice of learning challenge or participation in our numerous extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, children are given the freedom to make choices. Making the right choice in different situations is seen as an important part of giving the children the skills necessary to make the right decisions when faced with difficult and risky situations.

Mutual respect & tolerance of those with different faiths & beliefs

Mutual respect is at the heart of our aims and values, ‘to treat everyone and everything with respect’ and. We place a great deal of emphasis on creating an inclusive school ethos where all the different experiences of children and their families are valued and our diversity is celebrated.

As a consequence our school is a harmonious community where pupils get on together well, care for one another and learn well to respect differences. Celebrations across many themes have helped children gain insights into each other’s backgrounds and to recognise the positive aspects of different cultures. Our children know why it is important that they all make a positive contribution to their own class, the school and the community as a whole. Children are proud of the school, they know that they as individuals are valued and respected.

Our children know, and understand, that it is expected, and imperative, that respect is shown to everyone, whatever differences we may have, and to respect everything ranging from school equipment to religious beliefs to family background. Children learn that their behaviour choices have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect. Courtesy and good manners are expected and are the norm.

Specific examples of how we enhance understanding and respect for different faiths and beliefs include:

- in RE and PSHE and other lessons develop awareness and appreciation of other cultures both in the present day and in the past. We follow the Shrewsbury Diocese scheme of work in RE ‘The Way, The Truth and The Life’ and often deliver it through comparative RE themes such as ‘Prayer’ or ‘religious Buildings’. We invite the Ethnic Diversity in to school to give talks, assemblies and workshops covering different faiths.

The Governing Body at Our Lady’s Catholic Primary School fully endorses what, and how, the school is promoting British values but also recognise that, sadly, no school can guarantee that there will never be instances which are contrary to these values. However, such instances are extremely rare and we actively challenge pupils, staff, governors or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British values, including ‘extremist’ views.

Finally, through geography children develop a better understanding of what Britain is, learning more about capital cities, counties, rivers and mountains and how *Great Britain* differs from *England* and the *United Kingdom* as detailed in this diagram:

