

# ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL

## British Values Statement

I am special in God's eyes

We will be a happy, welcoming school with Christ at the centre, where everyone is recognised as special

"Do not be afraid for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by your name,  
you are mine.

Because you are precious in my eyes,  
because you are honoured and I love you."

Isaiah 43 : 2-5

In our school our values are promoted through our Catholic nature and ethos and they fully reflect the Government's defined British values.

As part of the St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust we follow the same British Values principles as the Trust:

*'As a Catholic community, our ethos is based on the Gospel values of love, respect and tolerance of others. Our Trust mission statement – "The glory of God is a human being fully alive" recognises that Christ is present in the uniqueness of every child. Following Jesus' example, we strive for our schools to be places where everyone is equally respected and unconditionally loved. We are committed to serving all within our community and local area'.*

We reinforce British values regularly and in the following ways:

As a Catholic school we seek to live out the values of Jesus Christ. We promote these values by our words and deeds, and Catholic practice therefore permeates every aspect of our school's activity. We provide a Catholic curriculum, which is broad and balanced, recognising that every pupil is unique and is created in the image of God (Gen 1:27).

Catholic Religious Education is the "core of the core curriculum" (Pope St John Paul II) 4 and the foundation of the entire educational process. We incorporate democratic principles, value the rule of law, support individual liberty and foster a community in which different faiths and beliefs are respected. We also provide a strong pastoral support and 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.

Our values are also promoted through high quality teaching, a rounded programme of assemblies and a positive behaviour policy, and through our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of pupils. All this gives our pupils opportunities to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

Through our school vision, ethos, agreed rules, curriculum and teaching we promote respect and tolerance for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles and we are confident that our continued focus on the Gospel Values will give our pupils the necessary awareness of the dignity of each human being, and what it means to be a good citizen in Britain today, embedding in them the building blocks of a future successful and productive life.

The recent Government and DfE have 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.”(DfE – 2015)*

In our school we reinforce British values regularly and in some of the following ways:

- Our School Mission Statement outlines our commitment to welcoming and respecting all people into a community rooted in love, tolerance, respect and celebration of differences

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- Assemblies and collective worship where we teach respect for all, the difference between right and wrong, tolerance and differences and respecting and following the law
- R.E lessons which teach the children about other faiths as well as deepening their understanding of their own faith.
- A range of curriculum topics which have strong links to British History and reflect modern British culture i.e. the Queens Knickers, Castles, People who Help Us
- Projects that encourage children to consider similarities and differences in their own and others' environment and the role they can play in preserving the natural world – designing posters to save the rainforest, road safety posters for the local roads
- Visits from authorities such as the police, fire service, ambulance service etc. are regular parts of our calendar and help reinforce the rule of law
- Working towards ECO-School Status
- Learning about different faith and cultural celebrations reflecting our rich ethnic school population and locality community i.e. Flores De Mayo, Chinese New Year, Eid, Diwali
- Our School Council and a democratic system of voting and providing a "voice" for all pupils
- Theme weeks i.e. Anti-Bullying Week, Remembrance, Healthy Week
- Support charities, whether local, national or global i.e. The Vineyard Food Bank, CAFOD, Operation Christmas child, Mission together and the Philippines Disaster
- Our School Code of Conduct – shared with all in our school.



## **Democracy:**

Democracy is evidenced in an age appropriate manner for an infant school. Pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard through our School Councils and Pupil questionnaires/ Pupil Voice. We have a school council which consists of two members from each class who are nominated and voted for. The children have the chance to elect a representative from each class that they feel will represent their classes views. Elections for the Pupil Council are based on pupil votes, reflecting our British electoral system and demonstrating democracy in action. The school council has been involved in purchasing Christmas gifts for those less fortunate than ourselves and they have recently been very instrumental in decisions about additions to our playground equipment and the new rules that will ensure their fair and safe use. They also play a part in staff recruitment. We listen to children's and parent's voices. Our school behaviour policy is clear that children are expected to contribute and co-operate, taking into account the views of others.



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, such as views on school meals and guest presenters, through our Pupil Councils and regular discussion class times. Many improvements to lunches and choice of visitors have been directly influenced by the opinions and ideas of our children.



## **The rule of law:**

From entry to school our pupils are continually taught to recognise the difference between right and wrong and this, alongside their developing maturity, helps them to apply their understanding of these concepts in their daily lives.

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.



The importance of Laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout regular school days, as well as when dealing with behaviour and through school assemblies. Visits from authorities such as the Police; Fire Service; Ambulance Service etc. are planned as part of our school calendar to help reinforce this message and children work together to create class rules at the start of each year. We also highlight the rules of the church and God in the RE curriculum.

Our Behaviour Policy sets out rules for all people in our school that builds respect for others. We consistently reinforce our high expectations of children and they are taught; the value and reasons behind our expectations (rules), that they are there to protect us, that everyone has a responsibility and, that there are consequences when rules are broken.

Details about school rewards and sanctions, choice and consequences are detailed in our Behaviour Policy.



### **Individual Liberty:**

Within our school, pupils are actively encouraged to be independent learners and make choices, knowing that they are in a safe supportive environment. We educate and provide boundaries for young pupils to make choices safely, through provision of a safe environment and empowering education.

Through our SMSC sessions we discuss different choices that the children can make and encourage them to make the right choices. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through E-Safety and circle-time activities.

Our behaviour policy is used to encourage pupils to reflect on their choices and the effect that it has on both their peers and adults. Pupils are given opportunities to resolve conflicts effectively and fairly. Through E-safety we teach the importance of keeping yourself safe by choosing not to share personal information.



### **Mutual Respect:**

We are an inclusive school where everyone is valued and has a contribution to make to the school and the wider community.

Our Catholic ethos and behaviour policy means that 'Mutual Respect' is embedded in all we do and say and we model this and support children in understanding the importance of respect through our words and actions. The core value of respect at St Joseph's Catholic Infant School underpins our work every day both in and out of the classroom.

At the heart of our Gospel teachings from Jesus Christ is:

**'To love one another as I have loved you'.**



In our school we believe that every individual is special and unique and created in the image of God. We believe that respect for others is a vital component of moral development and we expect all to respect others regardless of their background, faith, or race. Everyone is treated with respect in our school and pupils have been part of discussions and assemblies related to what this means and how it is shown.

We encourage open discussions in all areas but particularly in lessons which promote citizenship such as circle-time activities. Staff help children to understand how to respect others and children learn that their behaviours have an effect on their own rights and those of others.



### **Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs:**

Our core value of respect ensures tolerance of those who have different faiths and beliefs.

This is achieved through enhancing pupils understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience and value such diversity.

Our curriculum incorporates teaching and learning opportunities for children to explore aspects of the wider world and an appreciation of cultural diversity as in for example – Festivals, Diwali and Chinese New Year. The RE curriculum helps pupils deepen their understanding of their own faith as well as developing understanding and awareness of other religious communities as a basis for understanding them and respecting them. We help pupils to understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity.

Within the wider taught curriculum there is opportunity for visitors to the school or trips related to different cultures / faiths. For example children in Year 1 & 2 receive a visit from the local Imam and children throughout the school take part in making Diva's for Diwali and cooking for Chinese New Year. Assemblies are planned to give children opportunities to reflect on a variety of beliefs, cultures and moral values. Through our Remembrance Day activities we recognise all those who fought and died in World Wars to maintain and uphold our values.

# Celebrating Ourselves

