

Promoting British Values at St Thomas Becket

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 values have been reiterated in 2014.

At St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School we value the diverse ethnic backgrounds of all pupils and families and undertake a variety of events and lessons to celebrate these. We teach tolerance and respect for the differences in our community and the wider world.

Democracy:

Democracy is extensive within our school. Children have the opportunity to have their voices heard through discussion and open forums within their classes and the school council; through the Learning Challenge Curriculum where a key feature of each new study is a brainstorming of their ideas about what they would like to learn about a given topic; through pupil interviews as part of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and through pupil questionnaires.

The Rule of Law:

The importance of Laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout the curriculum and the school's behaviour policy . Pupils have regular opportunities to reflect on their behaviour through school and class collective worship. Children agree their own class rules at the start of each year. Visits from authorities such as the Police, Fire Service and our parish priest help reinforce this message. The children in Y6 complete a citizenship day each year in readiness for the increased independence which comes with transition to secondary school.

Individual Liberty:

Within school, children are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we provide boundaries and educate children to make choices safely, through of provision of a safe environment and empowering education that aims to develop independent, self-confident, co-operative, collaborative and resilient learners.

Children are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these appropriately. We teach this through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons and through our day to day conversations and modelling of expectations. In our school we believe it important to give children the freedom to make choices as part of their education and preparation for life. They are given opportunities to make choices through for example: choice of

challenge within a lesson; choice of how they record; or choice of participation in our numerous extra-curricular clubs and opportunities..

Mutual Respect:

St. Thomas Becket School is a multi-cultural Catholic primary school that strives to be a positive force in the life of the church. We aim to create a community which is underpinned by the Gospel values of Christ; where all children have the opportunity to develop spiritually, creatively, physically, socially and academically; where the talents and abilities of all members are valued and where compassion, tolerance and forgiveness are guiding principles. These values are embedded in our behaviour policy and expectations for all our school community. Displays around the school promote respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom rules and our daily conversations and expectations. Our school behaviour system recognises excellence at both class and school level and both staff and children are encouraged to nominate others for 'Good Samaritan' awards (for showing consideration towards others). Pupils are given leadership roles throughout the school through duties such as play leaders and school councillors as well as head boy and girl.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs:

This is achieved through enhancing children's understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity. This is supported by our annual multi-cultural week, whole school displays that recognise and celebrate diversity, Collective worship and learning in RE and PSHE. Through our RE programme of study, Come and See, we teach about respect for other faiths and beliefs.

British Values and our Curriculum

At St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School we value the diverse ethnic backgrounds of all children and their families and undertake a variety of events and lessons to celebrate these. We have found this approach to be enriching for all as it teaches tolerance and respect for the differences in our community and the wider world. Underpinning all of this is a range of curriculum topics which have strong links to the role of Britain in the world.

In KS2, classes learn about World War Two and the impact that the military had in fighting for the British Empire. This is linked with the annual Poppy Day celebrations where children purchase poppies and a minute's silence is held. A Remembrance Service is held in school each year in order to provide an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices made for freedom.

In KS1, children consider how Mary Seacole, Nelson Mandela and Emily Davidson helped to make the world a better place.

In English lessons across the school we study the works of English writers and poets and spend time discussing the impact of their work on British society as a whole as well as at a personal level.

In History lessons we focus on important moments throughout British history and help children to understand the chronology in order for them to gain an understanding of how Britain came to be: from the early British settlers, to the British Empire and up to modern day Britain. The pupils learn about key and important figures throughout British history, for example leaders such as King Henry VIII, Queen Victoria and Winston Churchill; or inventors such as Isombard Kingdom Brunel and Alexandra Graham Bell. Children learn how the lives of these key people, their deeds and accomplishments, impacted on the development of British society.

As a whole school, we have celebrated the Olympics, with Olympic themed sports days, given opportunities to learn about the history of Olympians in this country. Our Queen's Golden Jubilee was an important event for the school and as well as studying the role of the Royal family the children held a 'street party' event at lunchtime in the school hall. Traditional children's party food was served to all!

On a more general level, the school undertakes daily acts of collective worship which uphold traditional British Christian Values. These are also taught within formal PSHCE and RE lessons and on an informal nature throughout the school day.