

PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

Context

The Government set out its definition of 'British Values' in the 2011 Prevent Strategy. In June 2014, David Cameron emphasised the important role that 'British Values' can play in education. Although in 2014-15 this is something which is developing in its significance for schools, it is not something new at Willand School.

The school actively promotes the fundamental 'British Values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs in so much of what we do. These values are integral to our long-standing core values, aims and curriculum objectives and are exemplified in our curriculum and our Collective Worship. They are reinforced in the following ways:

Democracy

Children have many opportunities for their voices to be heard at Willand. 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. We encourage pupils to take ownership not only of their school but also of their own learning, progress and behaviour. This encourages a heightened sense of both personal and social responsibility and is demonstrated on a daily basis by our pupils.

The School Council is the most apparent formal example. The election of the School Council members reflects our British electoral system and demonstrates democracy and equality in action. Each class votes for a boy and girl to represent them each year. Pupils consider characteristics important for an elected representative and vote in secret. A governor, teacher and teaching assistant also attend. The School Council meets regularly to discuss issues raised by the different classes.

In the past, the School Council has requested more bins for playgrounds, advised on playground markings and undertaken consultations for the Parish Council. This year they have been consulted about improvements to the tuckshop and used their new budget to buy usherette trays so the tuckshop is now able to go to the playgrounds. They also co-ordinated the Mock General Election, acting as officials on Polling Day to count the votes and release the results to the Returning Officer.

The Governors take the views of the Council seriously. Their minutes are reviewed at each Full Governing Body meeting and the Chair and Vice Chair are invited to the final meeting of the year to feed back the views of the children on the work of the school.

Other examples are:

- The parents, children, staff and governors complete an annual consultation which is analysed as part of the school self-evaluation. Issues identified are then addressed.
- The pupils nominate various charities. Within their own class, they then select two to go forward to the School Council, who vote to decide which charities the school should support over the course of the year.

The Rule of Law

The importance of rules and laws, whether they be those that govern our school or our country, are referred to and reinforced often, such as in assemblies and when reflecting on behaviour choices. At the start of the school year, each class discusses and sets its own Class Rules, a set of principles that are 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.

Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves, and the consequences when laws are broken. These values are reinforced in different ways:

- visits from authorities such as the police and fire service;
- during Religious Education, when rules for particular faiths are thought about;
- during other school subjects, where there is respect and appreciation for different rules, for example, in a sports lesson.

Individual Liberty

In school, pupils are actively promoted to make choices within the boundaries of a safe, supportive environment which promotes independence; for example:

- choices about their learning when Foundation Stage children decide on child initiated activities;
- choices about their behaviour when children show self-discipline and courtesy in their conduct;
- choices about the roles and responsibilities they apply for and undertake in class or for the school;
- choices around their participation in extra-curricular activities.

Alongside rules and laws, we promote freedom of choice and the right to respectfully express views and beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions through discussion and debate, and are able to reflect on their learning through self-evaluations.

Our pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are taught how to exercise these safely, such as in our e-safety and PSHE/ SEAL lessons. Training in e-safety is a key aspect of this.

Mutual Respect

Mutual respect is at the heart of our aims and ethos. Children learn that their behaviour choices have an effect on themselves and others. All members of the school community should treat each other with respect. Pupils are taught that there is no distinction in the level of respect that they should show to different people. Our pupils know and understand that it is expected and imperative that respect is shown to everyone.

Visitors to the school often comment on the level of respect shown to them. Senior Citizens, who receive gifts from the children at Harvest time, regularly write to thank the children and comment on their excellent manners when delivering their gifts.

Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs

Willand is situated in an area which is not culturally diverse therefore we place a great emphasis on promoting diversity with the children. Collective Worship is carefully planned to address this issue. Assemblies include stories, celebrations and music from a variety of faiths and cultures. Members of different faiths, religions or nationalities are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning both in assemblies and in classes. In RE, children visit places of worship that are important to different faiths. Our Geography, History, Art, Music and PSHE teaching also reinforces this.

As a school, we value and celebrate the diverse heritages of everybody at Willand. Alongside this, we value and celebrate being part of Britain. In general terms, this means that we celebrate traditions, such as customs in the course of the year; for example, Harvest Festival, Sukkot, Chinese New Year and Diwali. We also value and celebrate national events such as Remembrance Day.

Sadly, no school can guarantee that there will never be instances which are contrary to this value. At Willand School, such instances are extremely rare. They are treated seriously in line with our Equality Policy.