

British values at St Mary's CE Primary School



Our Vision

To be a learning community that promotes the unique gifts, wellbeing and potential of every person. Our work is founded on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, building on His message of equality, peace and justice, guided by His words 'As I have loved you, so you must love one another' (John 13:34).

Our Inclusion Statement

St Mary's Lewisham serves the needs of all who come to the school, regardless of religious faith, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. Our school is a 'church school' not 'faith school', and like an Anglican parish church they serve all members of the community. Our school is proactive in supporting the journey of the church and wider community towards inclusivity and justice.

British Values

We take our responsibility to prepare children for life in modern Britain very seriously. We do this through our values-based approach to education, and by active and thoughtful involvement with all sections of our community. Our belief is that integration can be promoted by engagement with and respect for different views and religions, alongside rejection of intolerance and prejudice. We wish to ensure that our school becomes and remains a positive force for peace and good.

Values are the 'big ideas' that guide us in our lives and determine our thinking and behaviour, and so we ensure that fundamental British values are embedded in all aspects of school life. Our children embrace these concepts with enthusiasm, and demonstrate a good understanding of their application to their own lives. Our aim is to help all our children discover and aspire to be the very best they can be, and to prepare them for the life of work and enable their development as good citizens.

We actively promote British values through our school vision, Christian ethos, agreed rules, curriculum, teaching, extra-curricular visits and activities, and through the continuous professional development of our staff and governors and workshops for children and families.

Democracy

We began our journey to become a values-based school in 2014 when the whole school community came together to debate and vote for our 22 shared values which has now been refined to 6 core values. These are now on display throughout our school, and provide us with the key vocabulary we need every day to talk to children about their behaviour, learning and life in school. Our mutually agreed values also provide the focus for our collective worship. In



each half-term we focus on one of our values, and class teacher's work with children to produce one piece of work connected with that value. This work becomes part of our values display.

The school vision was reviewed and a new version was agreed with input from the whole school community over several months in 2018. This included a new school motto: 'Faith Love Community'. The pupils also have their voice heard through their democratically elected school council representatives, and through the annual pupil questionnaire. They have been introduced to local democratic institutions such as the Council Chambers (where the school council met the Mayor of Lewisham in 2018) and the Houses of Parliament (where the school council met our local MP in 2018). There is a children's Faith Group, also elected by the children, and they take responsibility for developing RE, worship and spirituality across the school. They meet regularly with the adult Faith Group.

The Rule of Law

Children are familiar with the concept of the rule of law through their engagement with the rules that govern the class and the school as well as the country. In order to promote understanding of accountability and the importance of the rule of law, we have arranged for the school council to meet their local MPs at the Houses of Parliament in April 2019. Members of the school council will cascade their learning into each class on their return, and this work will be embedded into the curriculum by an ongoing programme of annual visits.

School rules are reinforced by our high expectations of children's behaviour, by our consistent approach to behaviour management, and through school collective worship. Children are taught the value and reasons behind rules as well as the responsibilities that they involve and the consequences when they are broken. Visits from authorities such as the police and fire service are a regular part of our calendar and help reinforce this message. For example, in autumn 2018 the police are visited reception children as 'people who help us', years 1 and 2 to 'introduce the police', years 3 and 4 to talk about citizenship, and years 5 and 6 to introduce their 'Young Citizenship' programme.

Individual Liberty

Our shared values provide us with the key vocabulary we need to talk to our children about their behaviour, learning, and their life in school. We use these discussions and collective worship to promote self-worth and self-respect in our children, so that they learn to value themselves. Children are aware of the value of their voice, as the school council is consulted on many aspects of school life.

We also teach the responsibilities that go hand-in-hand with liberty, for example through our development of our 'young leaders' who are given specific tasks and responsibilities such as setting up collective worship, dining hall support, leading play, and helping other children with reading. We actively encourage children to develop independence in learning, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. Children are encouraged to think for themselves, and they are advised how to exercise their personal freedoms safely (for example through our E-safety and PSHE lessons). Both parents and children are taught about the internet and how to use it safely, both in class and through visits by external organisations such as Childnet. We have also created an E-safety scheme of work to address the findings from our recent E-safety pupil survey.



Mutual Respect

As a values-based school, respect is fundamental to our practice. Respect is taught explicitly within lessons and collective worship, and is shown to families (for example through regular newsletters). Adults around the school promote respect for others, as do our young leaders. Respect for others and for the environment is reiterated through our classroom and learning rules, as well as through our behaviour policy.

We further develop respect by actively promoting children's understanding of the guiding principles that underpin different religions. We ensure that there are many visits, trips and opportunities for children to learn about other faiths, creeds and cultures. Our school council has worked on concepts such as the rule of law and democracy (for example visiting Council Chambers together in 2018). We actively promote and reflect the wide range of cultures that make up our school community through the everyday curriculum. In addition, special events such as Black History Month, Chinese New Year celebrations and International Day are held annually.

The school library includes a set of values books for each of the six school values and a set of PSHE linked books, both fiction and non-fiction. These further promote children's reflections on and respect for different religions and cultures.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

We enhance children's understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society by giving them opportunities to experience and celebrate such diversity. Our curriculum enables children to expand their knowledge, understanding and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Collective worship and discussions involving prejudices and bullying have been followed and supported by learning in RE and PSHE. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school. The wide range of visits (and visitors) to places of worship (covering all major faiths) supports children in developing their own ideas about, and respect for other faiths through engagement with people and practices.

Equalities

Everyone in Britain and in our school is protected by the law, regardless of their age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. We are committed to eliminating discrimination, and to the advancement of equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not. In this way it is our hope and aspiration that we will foster good relations between groups of people, and help Britain become a fairer society.

Each class have chosen a community project to support over the school year, the choice of project and the activities carried out have been led by the children. These have supported the children in developing a greater understanding of different groups within the local community: the homeless; asylum seekers; those with mental health issues (through a gardening project to create a therapeutic garden in the Church grounds); the elderly and those ill in hospital. One class are focusing on responsibility for the environment by leading a recycling project.

Reviewed April 19



