



# St. Paul's Catholic School: How British Values are Promoted Through our School Ethos.

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## Context

The government has set out its definition of 'British values' in the 'Prevent Strategy' (2011). This has subsequently been considered as part of the Government's advice on how schools can effectively promote British Values as part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education issued in November 2014. The Government's advice was designed to prevent the extremism and religious radicalization of young people in the United Kingdom. The promotion of 'British values' is central to Catholic education because British values have their origin in the Christian values of our nation. British values are currently identified by the government as: DEMOCRACY, RULE OF LAW, INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY, MUTUAL RESPECT AND TOLERANCE OF THOSE OF DIFFERENT FAITHS AND BELIEFS.

## Our British Values Philosophy

At St Paul's Catholic School, we recognise, the importance of developing our students holistically. We strive to ensure that students can develop academically as well as spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Our aim is that they are fully prepared for life in British society, so that they can take their role as good citizens and be the best that they can be and make the best possible contribution to the Common Good in society.

Within the framework of Catholic Christian Values, we teach the importance of British Values by focusing on the meaning of what it is to live a good life. We draw upon the example of Christ and his welcome and inclusion of all, the development of catholic virtues, which have been developed further within Catholic Social Teaching.

At St Paul's we provide an education which focuses on the formation of the whole person and on our vocation and purpose in life. We place a significant emphasis on the celebration of individuality and difference within our communities and our calling to work for the key values of Catholic Social Teaching. We strive to ensure that our students and staff alike work for the, common good, care for our common home and human dignity. In the service of others, as in our mission statement we always strive to love serve and do the best that is possible, keeping the poor and vulnerable at the heart of what we do to ensure solidarity and peace and dignity of all. This provides the context and meaning for understanding why British values are important.

The values of the school are encapsulated in our mission statement. At the heart of the Catholic school is the belief in the human person, called by God into being and

offered the fullness of life. (John 10:10) Our school community shares its belief in God, the creator of all, visible and incarnate in Christ, and in the spirit, abiding in the school. Pope Benedict, in his address to Teachers and Religious in 2010, said that the school should be 'First and foremost...a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth' (Twickenham, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2010)

We are a Christ-centred school and committed, therefore, to being a faith community, a place of belonging, growth and service. These characteristics are not confined to one part of our school and they need a common effort. The beliefs, values and practices of our school define its truth and mission and these are entirely in agreement with the British Values promoted through the Prevent Strategy.

We further demonstrate our love for others by promoting forgiveness. We follow Christ's example and forgive people when they have done wrong. As part of our commitment to preserving the dignity of individuals and promoting forgiveness, we model Christ's example by treating people as we would wish to be treated. As a school where service is at the heart of our core values, our common approach is to put others before ourselves. In doing this we follow the model of Jesus, 'the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve', Jesus once told his followers, 'and to give His life as a ransom for many'. And at the Last Supper, as Jesus washed the feet of his astonished disciples, he gave this saying new meaning, urging them, in effect, to serve one another as he served them'. Our approach at St. Paul's is to serve others and to put their interests above our own. We model this behaviour so that the pupils in our care understand the concept of service to others. We aim to help and support others whenever we possibly can.

The examples that follow are an indication of some of the many ways we seek to embed British values at St. Paul's Catholic School and should be seen as an indication of our approach rather than an exhaustive list.

## **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 every day interactions, as well as when dealing with behaviour and through assemblies. The curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils are taught the values and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken.

## **Individual Liberty**

Pupils are actively encouraged to make independent choices knowing that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. We also focus on the importance of

individual responsibility. We encourage pupils to see themselves as unique individuals able to make a unique contribution to the community. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights, responsibilities and personal freedoms and receive advice about how to exercise these safely, for example through our exploration of E-Safety in computing and our behaviour for learning system.

## **Mutual Respect**

Respect is one of the core values of our school and is modelled by all pupils and staff. The school promotes respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning environments as well as extra-curricular activities such as sport. In line with our commitment to democracy, pupils are always able to voice their opinions as we foster an environment where students can debate ideas and are safe to disagree with each other. We encourage pupils to provide evidence to support opinions and to realise the value of co-operation as well as decision making through voting. Our emphasis on ethics, fairness and justice means that we ask our pupils to ensure that they look out for those who might be vulnerable. The school actively promotes social inclusion through an explicit focus on fostering a respect for difference.

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

This is achieved through equipping pupils with the ability to develop positive values, understand their own beliefs and their place in a culturally diverse society. We give our pupils opportunities to experience such diversity within the school community and within the wider community. All pupils experience a connection with other cultures and beliefs through RE lessons and local, regional and international links. The emphasis on enterprise, working with others, and learning other languages directly contributes to the appreciation of other perspectives on life. Our Religious Education curriculum follows the teaching of the Church in providing a broad and balanced education, which includes an understanding of and respect for people of other faiths or none and other religions, cultures and lifestyles.

## **Evidence of how British Values are promoted at St. Paul's**

*'The school has a very strong Catholic ethos with deep foundations whilst firmly looking outward to the world. The school has a very real sense of inclusion and belonging underpinned by respect for the individual and the need for forgiveness'. (Section 48 Inspection Report)*

*'Mutual respect is much in evidence. In particular, special needs students are treated with the upmost respect by all.' (Section 48 Inspection Report)*

*'In lessons there is a climate of trust. Opinions and views are valued, and students are confident in offering and sharing their ideas.' (Section 48 Inspection Report)*

*'The curriculum is appropriate; it is broad and balanced, enabling high levels of achievement and contributing to the spiritual and moral development of all students and fostering effective links with PHSE.'* (Section 48 Inspection Report)

*'The curriculum is enriched by visits (eg to Coventry Cathedral), outside speakers, and the marking of weeks such as prison week and Holocaust Memorial Day).'* (Section 48 Inspection Report)

*'Students' understanding of sex and relationships education is wide-ranging. They have opportunities to discuss different types and contexts for relationships such as homosexuality, cohabitation, love and marriage from different viewpoints.'* (PHSE Inspection Report)

*'Students' personal development is outstanding. They are given many opportunities to develop leadership skills and be part of a team. Students are able to discuss constructively and are very confident and articulate.'* (PHSE Inspection Report)

*'Good links are made to 'learning talents' in lessons which ensure that students develop wider personal skills.'* (PHSE Inspection Report)

*'Teachers create a safe learning environment of respect and tolerance so that sensitive and controversial issues are approached in a mature manner. Students listen to others' viewpoints.'* (PHSE Inspection Report)

*'The curriculum is stimulating and provides many opportunities for high quality PHSE education and wider personal development.'* (PHSE Inspection Report)

*'The needs of potentially vulnerable students are very well met by the wide range of services and support available from counselling, mentors and targeted one-to-one work on raising self-esteem.'* (PHSE Inspection Report)

*'There is a strong emphasis on employability skills and different career pathways. Alongside this is some beneficial work on challenging stereotypes in the workplace.'* (PHSE Inspection Report)

*'98% of parents strongly agree or agree that St. Paul's provides a holistic Christian education for my child, which involves valuing and caring for them as unique persons, made in the image and likeness of God.'* Parent survey 2020/4

*As the only MK faith school St. Paul's provides a holistic Christian education for my child, which involves valuing and caring for them as unique persons, made in the image and likeness of God. They care for holistic wellbeing of the child and celebrate diversity.* Parent survey 2020/4