

Teaching British Values at St Thomas's

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's we aim to provide teaching and learning opportunities for all children, to explore and aim to 'live' by these values as we do our school and Christian Values.

As a school we encourage children to;

- Describe and recognise their own and different identities and the groups that they feel they belong to
- Appreciate that identity consists of many factors
- Recognise that each person's identity is unique and can change
- Begin to understand the idea of stereotypes.

What are British Values?

Democracy

The Rule of Law

Individual Liberty

Mutual Respect

Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs

Democracy - What do we teach at St Thomas's?

Our children are always listened to by an adult and are taught to listen carefully and with concern for each other, respecting the right for every individual to have opinions and have their voice heard. Children also have the opportunity to air their opinions and ideas through our School Council. The elections of the School Council members are based solely on pupil votes, reflecting our British democratic system.

Rule of law - What do we teach at St Thomas's?

The importance of laws, whether they are those that govern the class, the school or the country, are discussed and reinforced in our school. Our children are taught the value and reason behind laws, that they govern and protect us and the consequences when laws are broken. Worship themes, Christian Values alongside our school ethos demonstrate this in action. Visits from authorities such as the Police, Fire Service etc. are a regular part of our calendar and help to reinforce this message.

Individual liberty - What do we teach at St Thomas's?

Within school, children 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 safe and sensible choices through provision of a safe environment and an empowering and inclusive curriculum. This is clearly demonstrated in our worship themes, displays, lessons including PSHE and our school ethos.

Respect and tolerance - What do we do at St Thomas's?

Mutual Respect

Respect is one of our chosen school values and is part of our school ethos and behaviour policy. The children have been involved in discussions related to what respect means and how it is shown. Additional support is provided for individual children to develop self-esteem and to practise strategies they can employ to help improve their respect of others.

Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs

We develop children's understanding of different faiths and beliefs through our religious education lessons and wider context work. We also study world faith units as part of our R.E. curriculum as outlined by the diocese. Through this our pupils gain an understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society.

Throughout our taught curriculum, children undertake a range of history topics about the development of Britain through different periods. Alongside this through collective worship, the sharing of stories, images, events, music and expectations we promote not only British Values but Christian Values as a whole.