



## St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



## British Values

Autumn 2014

### Introduction

The inspection of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of the pupils (SMSC) has been part of OFSTED's remit over the last 20 years.

Since 2011 and strengthened since 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014, there has been a new aspect of SMSC, that of the inclusion of 'British Values.'

Below is the summary from the DfE Homepage on this topic:

*The Department for Education has today (27 November 2014) published guidance on promoting British values in schools to ensure young people leave school prepared for life in modern Britain.*

*The guidance aims to help both independent and state-maintained schools understand their responsibilities in this area. All have a duty to 'actively 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. These values were first set out by the government in the 'Prevent' strategy in 2011.*

*Until now schools have been required to 'respect' these values, but as a result of changes brought in earlier in the year all schools must now have a clear strategy for embedding these values and show how their work with pupils has been effective in doing so. In a letter to the Education Select Committee in March, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools Lord Nash explained the changes were designed to "tighten up the standards on pupil welfare to improve safeguarding, and the standards on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils to strengthen the barriers to extremism".*

*Ofsted and the independent inspectorates now take the work of schools in this area into account during inspections.*

*Publishing the guidance today, Lord Nash said:*

*A key part of our plan for education is to ensure children become valuable and fully rounded members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background.*

*We want every school to promote the basic British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.*

*This ensures young people understand the importance of respect and leave school fully prepared for life in modern Britain.*

*Examples of the understanding and knowledge pupils are expected to learn include:*

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process*
- an understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law*
- an acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour*
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination*

*Examples of actions schools can take to promote British values are to:*

- include in suitable parts of the curriculum - as appropriate for the age of pupils - material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain, in contrast to other forms of government in other countries*
- ensure all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils*
- use opportunities such as general or local elections to hold mock elections to promote fundamental British values and provide pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view*
- consider the role of extra-curricular activity, including any run directly by pupils, in promoting fundamental British values*

*The government today also published its interim response to a consultation of the revised Independent Schools Standards (ISS). The revised standards cover independent schools, academies and free schools, ensuring they - along with local authority-maintained schools - must promote British values.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Our school's position**

Below is an extract from our Self Evaluation Document from the section on 'Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural' development of pupils. It seeks to capture the essence of our current position on this topic:

*The promotion of 'British Values', ie. democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs, all of which which have Gospel/Christian values at their heart, is something that is provided for and promoted through our Mission Statement, in RE lessons, assemblies, the Pupil Council and the new International Primary Curriculum. As a result, the pupils show mature attitudes in these areas.*

## **Our plans to enhance our provision**

Guidance sheets on SMSC from the OFSTED Handbook (July 2014) and a list of potential questions for pupils on SMSC issues in general and British Values in particular, have been issued to the staff.

This information is used to heighten staff awareness of both direct and indirect opportunities to promote not only SMSC education as a whole but also those of British Values in particular. This is especially the case in planning in all subjects, including RE (including the sections on 'Other Faiths') and International Primary Curriculum, and when opportunities arise in and out of lessons through pupils' natural curiosity and questioning. The questions will also be used with the Pupil Council as a group and with all pupils in their contribution to the pupil council process.

In order to launch the whole notion of 'British Values' and where they fit into our beliefs as a Catholic school, including our curriculum and 'hidden curriculum', in December 2014 the Headteacher led a Key Stage 2 assembly and the Deputy Head a Key Stage 1 assembly.

It is important to emphasise what is contained in our SEF extract, ie. that British values as defined by the Government are already at the heart of a Catholic school through its adherence to Gospel Values. This is made clear in the document, 'Christ at the Centre' written and published initially by the Archdiocese of Birmingham and latterly adopted by the Bishops' Conference for England and Wales for Catholic Education. This document states that 'Gospel Values' are best defined by the Beatitudes.

The effectiveness of our strategy in promoting 'British Values' will be monitored through formal and informal discussion with pupils, as part of our 'Supporting Teaching and Learning' policy, and evidenced through work in pupils' books, projects, photographs, attitudes and behaviours in and out of lessons.

\*\*\*\*\*