

Statement of British Values

Since September 2014 schools have been required to actively promote fundamental British values to meet the new Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education standard.

What are British values?

The document “Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools” says “Schools should 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”. It is this list of values that are used below as a basis for this statement.

Promoting British values at Crookham CE (Aided) Infant School

At Crookham Infants, the importance of SMSC education in developing well-rounded citizens who contribute to society and improve their communities has always been recognised and promoted as integral to membership of ‘Team Crookham’! British fundamental values have always been at the heart of what we do, although in the past they may not have been explicitly labelled as such.

Our school values, Love God, Love Others, Love Learning, derive from the beliefs of Britain’s state church of which our school is a part – the Church of England – and from the biblical foundations that are arguably the most important influence on the British legal and justice system and the British political system, and the source of ideas of freedom, tolerance, due process, political service, democracy and equality. The same biblical values that lie at the root of our national identity are at the core of our school aims.

When the term ‘British’ values is used it is important to underline that this embraces the fact that we are a nation with a proud history of people of many different ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs and secular values all living together in a plural society. A Church of England school models this wider picture of inclusivity, freedom and equality. So the values that underpin this school are British to the core.

How do we promote these values?

The ways in which we achieve the requirement to promote British values are many. Some of them are explored below.

Democracy

Each class sees democracy in action as they elect members to represent them on the School Council, following hustings and a secret ballot. The School Council, which meets regularly with the Headteacher and invited guests including governors, chooses its officers through an election and will often vote on proposals within meetings. Pupil voice is also heard through class circle time, pupil interviews and class assemblies.

The Rule of Law

The understanding of right and wrong is a thread that runs through school activity. It is discussed in school and class assemblies and Collective Worship, RE and PSHCE lessons. Children are supported in making good choices between right and wrong by general school rules (some of which, in classes, are democratically selected by the children themselves) and particular rules e.g. those that govern the use of play equipment. Children are continually reminded about what is needed to make a safe and happy community and the role of boundaries (rules, laws) to achieve this. To reinforce this message, visits e.g. from our Police Liaison Officer, Police Officers, Armed Services personnel and the Fire Service are a regular feature of our calendar.

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Individual liberty

We are keenly aware of our responsibility to develop children who are able to make good choices independently. We provide a culture, environment and opportunity for children to make their own choices, recognising the need for their own and others' safety and well-being. This is supported by a programme of E-safety and PSHCE lessons and assemblies. Children are given the freedom to make choices, within boundaries set for them, so that as the supervision of teachers and parents becomes increasingly remote when they move to Junior school, they are prepared for the next level of life decisions that they will have to make.

Mutual respect

Respect is a key pillar of our school aims, and is defined at Crookham Infants as recognising that everyone is important and special, and needs to be treated as such. Our behaviour policy, our school rules, the modelling of adults and pupil leaders as well as the explicit teaching through PSHCE and assemblies, actively promotes this value each week.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

Our school, like our country, has a richness that is due to the diversity of those who live here, and we value, embrace, and respect those from different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. We are a church school with a Christian ethos, but, true to the foundation of the school, this makes us an INCLUSIVE community (the original school was set up for local children previously denied access to education: "the poor of the parish"). Therefore we are the community school that serves and respects our community irrespective of background, faith or belief. The RE syllabus (Diocese of Guildford) supports children's understanding of different faiths, and allows them to learn both about and from them.