

British values

In June 2014, David Cameron emphasised the important role that British values can play in education. Further, how well a school promotes such values is an aspect of Ofsted's inspection process.

Although in 2014-15 this is something which is developing in its significance for schools, it is not something new at Fairfield's Primary School. British values are promoted in so much of what we do, not least through our rights respecting ethos based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and during our school assemblies, Religious Education and Citizenship sessions. The values are integral to our learning aims which can be found on the school website.

As well as actively promoting British values, the opposite also applies: we would actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British values, including 'extremist' views.

The term 'British values' might be slightly misleading in that these values are integral to so many countries throughout the world – they differ in no way from the values of most western European countries, for example.

Being part of Britain

As a school, we value and celebrate the diverse heritages of everybody at Fairfield's. Events such as the recent 'Diversity Party' ensure that children and adults from the school and local area are encouraged to join together and learn about each other's cultures, customs, faiths and languages.

In addition to this, we work together to support children and their families when English is not their first language. We provide access to Adult English Lessons and the development of the 'Young Interpreters' within the school provide support to pupils. The 'Young Interpreters', now a national scheme which has been recently awarded the 'Grassroots Excellence Award' at 'The Guardian Public Services Awards Evening', began at Fairfield's as a KS2 pilot project and provides support to children who are new to English from their peers who help them to make friends, settle into school life and routines and learn the English language.

Alongside this, we value and celebrate being part of Britain. In general terms, this means that we celebrate traditions, such as customs, festivals and commemorations in the course of the year; for example, Harvest festival during the autumn term, Remembrance Sunday, Christmas and Easter. More specifically, we learn about Britain in lessons including:

Geographically:

Year 1 – Identify the UK and its countries and study the human and physical characteristics of the local area

Year 2 - Know the characteristics of the 4 countries and capital cities of the UK learn the names of continents and oceans. Study of the Isle of Coll and comparison with local area.

Year 4 – Local area study; compare with a different region of the UK.

Year 5 – An in-depth study of the UK compared with Sweden.

Year 6 – Compare Britain with inhospitable places

Historically: *The main focus of the curriculum is British history. Children learn about an aspect of life and how this has developed and changed over time. Examples include;*

Year 1 – Schools in the Victorian era

Year 2 – The Great Fire of London, Florence Nightingale and Edith Cavell, Seaside past and present

Year 3 – The impact of the Roman Empire on Britain. Stone Age to Iron Age.

Year 4 - The Anglos Saxons.

Year 6 – Democracy and the ancient Greeks

Democracy

Children, parents and staff have many opportunities for their voices to be heard at Fairfields Primary School. Democracy is central to how we operate; our School Councillors are an excellent example. The election of the School Councillors reflects our British electoral system and demonstrates democracy in action: candidates make speeches, pupils consider characteristics important for an elected representative, pupils vote in secret using ballot boxes etc. Made up of two representatives from each class, the School Councillors meet regularly to discuss issues raised by the different classes and plan events for the whole school. The School Councillors are actively involved in staff recruitment. They conduct school tours for candidates and give feedback to the interview panel. There are also opportunities to provide teachers with feedback, such as a review of themed weeks and policies including the Anti-bullying and behaviour policies.

Other examples of 'pupil voice' are:

- Children agree their Class Charter and the rights associated with these; all children contribute to the drawing up of the charter.
- Children nominate various charities to support .

Pupils are always listened to by adults and are taught to listen carefully and to each other, respecting the right of every individual to have their opinions and voices heard. We encourage pupils to take ownership of not only their school but also of their own learning and progress. This encourages a heightened sense of both personal and social responsibility and is demonstrated on a daily basis by our pupils.

Rules and laws

The importance of rules and laws, whether they be those that govern our school or our country, are referred to and reinforced often, such as in assemblies and when reflecting on behaviour choices. At the start of the school year, each class discusses and sets its own Class Charter, a set of principles that are clearly understood by all and seen to be necessary to ensure that every class member is able to learn in a safe and ordered environment. Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves, and the consequences when laws are broken. These values are reinforced in different ways:

- visits from authorities such as the police and fire service
- during Religious Education, when rules for particular faiths are thought about
- during other school subjects, where there is respect and appreciation for different rules for example in a sports lesson.

Individual liberty

Alongside rules and laws, we promote freedom of choice and the right to respectfully express views and beliefs. Through the provision of a safe, supportive environment and empowering education, we provide boundaries for our young pupils to make choices safely; for example:

- choices about who they prefer to learn with in some activities
- choices about how they record some learning
- choices around the participation in extra-curricular activities
- choices from a variety of activities at lunchtime.

Our pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are taught how to exercise these safely. We place a high regard on e-safety and are explicit with children about why they need to make the right choices when online.

Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Our pupils know and understand that it is expected and imperative that respect is shown to *everyone*, whatever differences we may have, and to *everything*, whether it is a school resource, a religious belief or whatever. Children learn that their behaviour choices have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community should treat each other with respect.

Specific examples of how we at Fairfields Primary enhance pupils understanding and respect for different faiths and beliefs are:

- Through Religious Education, Citizenship and other lessons where we might develop awareness and appreciation of other cultures – in English through fiction and in Art by considering culture from other parts of the world.

- Through assemblies where we celebrate diversity and difference. Children enjoy learning about other faiths and cultures. Great emphasis is placed on our identity as individuals, families and communities.

Sadly, no school can guarantee that there will never be instances which are contrary to this value. At Fairfield's Primary School, such instances are extremely rare. They are treated seriously in line with school policies.