

British Values at Whitchurch Junior School

At Whitchurch Junior School, we feel a deep responsibility to nurture and develop core values that can guide our lives and be shared and expressed by everyone – regardless of faith or belief. These guide our school community, helping to form character, spiritual awareness and self-esteem.

As a school community we seek to promote reflection about children's own beliefs and faith and to encourage their own interest in and respect of other religions and faiths. As a Church of England school, we aim to anchor these values in the Christian faith through our collective worship and whole school ethos.

We believe the schools' core values encourage children to recognise the difference between right and wrong and how their own actions affect others. As this understanding develops children learn how to co-operate and empathise with others of differing backgrounds.

Throughout any academic year, we explore 7 core values; their meaning and their significance in Christianity, other religions and secular teachings. We spend one week on each value and then repeat the cycle throughout the academic year.

Our values are: *Respect, Responsibility, Enjoyment, Effort, Care, Cooperation and Initiative*

The DfE have 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.”***

We promote and reinforce these values regularly in the following ways:

Democracy

Democracy is embedded at the school. Pupils are always listened to by adults and are taught to listen carefully and respect the right of every individual to have their opinions and voices heard. Pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard through our School Council. Children put themselves forward through a short presentation and the election of the School Council members is based on pupil votes, thereby demonstrating democracy in action. They also have a chance to explore other leadership roles and take responsibility for change, these are: Eco Councillors, Junior Librarians, Digital Leaders, Anti-bullying ambassadors and House captains. All of which are elected through a voting process.

Rule of Law

The importance of laws, whether they are those that govern the class, the school or the country, are consistently reinforced. Each class discusses and sets its own rules 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. Our Christian values enable children to find examples of why we follow a code of conduct and to recognise and appreciate when others demonstrate positive behaviour. We teach the value of, and reason behind, laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from authorities such as the Police and Fire Service help reinforce this message. Year 6 children participate in 'Safety Scene' where they learn about their responsibilities with regards to the rule of law which helps to equip them to resist negative influences and pressures.

Individual Liberty

Within school, pupils 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 young pupils to make choices safely including making judgements about risks, impacts and consequences of their actions. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons. Whether it be through choice of challenge, of how they record, of participation in our numerous extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, pupils are given the freedom to make their own choices.

Mutual Respect

Part of our school ethos and behaviour policy are based around core values such as “respect” and “responsibility”. These values determine how we live as a community. Collective Worship is based on our values and they are central to how we expect everyone to go about their life at our school. Values are highly visible around the school and passages of the Bible are linked to these and shared with the children once a week by our local Reverend. Our pupils live by the values and are keen to identify them in one another. They understand what they mean and can demonstrate these fully. The pupils know and understand what is expected and that it is imperative that respect is shown to everyone, whatever differences we may have and to everything, however big or small.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs

This is achieved through enhancing pupils understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity. As we are not a culturally diverse school, we work hard to ensure our children have the opportunities to study other cultures and faiths through our broad and balanced curriculum. Our Worship helps all pupils to find out about themselves and others linking their lives to the communities in which they belong. We have strong links to a community in Uganda through the Pearl of Africa choir and once a year support them with visits to the UK.

British Values and the Religious Education Curriculum

Our religious education curriculum (following the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus) gives our children the opportunity to learn about and learn from religion and belief around the world, including all the major world religions. Through this, we ensure that we develop the children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding as they progress through our school. As a Church of England school, our RE syllabus is weighted towards Christianity, but includes comparisons across religions in each unit of enquiry. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school.