

## Lower School - Promoting Fundamental British Values

### Introduction

As of September 2014, the DfE requires all schools to promote the historical and current values that underpin the national identity known as “being British”. Within this, all schools are required to ensure that the curriculum actively promotes these fundamental British values.

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy - values of:

- **Democracy:** Respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process
- **The rule of law:** Respect for the basis on which the law is made and applies in England
- **Individual liberty:** Support and respect for the liberties of all within the law
- **Mutual respect and tolerance:** Support for equality of opportunity for all and respect and tolerance of different religions, faiths and other beliefs

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.”

The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 for the new social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) standard came into force on 29th September 2014.

The regulations state that to meet the standard for the SMSC development of pupils, the proprietor of the independent school must:

- 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
- Ensure that principles are actively promoted which -
  - Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
  - Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
  - Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely
  - Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
  - Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
  - Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
  - Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England
- Prevent the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school; and actively challenge extreme or disrespectful views.

- Take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. This should be:
  - While they are in attendance at the school
  - While they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school; or
  - In the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere;

### **British values: expectations for pupils**

The DfE's non-statutory advice for improving the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) development in independent schools, has information on expectations for pupils.

Paragraph 13 of the document sets out 'the kinds of understanding and knowledge that can be expected in pupils' as a result of schools meeting the standard to respect 'fundamental British values'. These include:

- An understanding as to how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- An understanding that participation in elections by those opposed to democracy should be allowed by law, but the success of such candidates is undesirable for the well-being of society if it would lead to the end of democracy;
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety;
- An understanding that bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account to the people, through the democratic organs of government;
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law, and an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour;
- Some understanding of the problems of identifying and combatting discrimination (based on protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010).

St George's Lower School has been awarded the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools 'Recognition of Commitment Award', and we are working towards Level 1 status. In St George's Lower School both the rights of the child and British values are reinforced regularly and in the following ways (please note: this list is indicative only, and non-exhaustive):

### **Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Development in St George's Lower School**

- Daily acts of Collective Worship
- Behaviour Policy and strategies
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Inquiry based learning
- PSHE lessons and Circle Time
- School Council elections and meetings
- House Captains elections
- House Competitions
- 'Talk Homework'
- Annual Healthy Choices Week
- Annual Anti-Bullying Focus Week
- Celebration of festivals
- Visits to places of worship
- Promotion and Modelling of Christian Values
- Themed assemblies
- Celebration assemblies
- Classroom assemblies
- Thought for the Day

- SRE lessons
- Protective Behaviours
- Zen Den
- Class charters
- Rights Respecting School Award
- Better Games
- AWARDS assemblies
- Cross-School Activity Sessions
- Supporting/Enabling charitable fundraising events organised by children
- Transition arrangements for pupils moving to new classes/schools
- Participation in local and regional community, arts, music and sporting events
- Regular Pupil Conferencing
- Individual Pupil Passports
- Individual Target Folders
- PATHs programmes
- Friends for Life Programme
- Social Groups

### **How do we actively promote British Values in St George's Lower School?**

Every school is expected to ensure that its curriculum enables the pupils to explore what it means to be British.

Within this, schools are encouraged to develop the pupils' ability to:

- describe their own identities and the groups that they feel they belong to;
- recognise different identities and experiences;
- 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.

The Rights Respecting School Award helps our children to achieve their potential and become responsible citizens. Through our curriculum our pupils feel empowered about their education, and gain a deeper understanding of how their behaviour and actions affect the rights of others. The Rights Respecting Schools Award supports our pupils to grow into confident, caring and responsible citizens, both in school and in the wider community.

In St George's Lower School – and in line with the individual pupils' capacity to understand the concepts and ideas – we aim to:

#### **Democracy:**

- Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of, and promote respect for, public institutions and services
- Teach pupils how they can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- Include in the curriculum information on the advantages and disadvantages of democracy and how it works in Britain
- Encourage pupils to become involved in decision-making processes and ensure they are listened to in school
- Hold 'mock elections' so pupils learn how to argue and defend points of view
- Hold elections for representation e.g. School Council, House Captains, Food Committee representatives
- Help pupils to express their views
- Teach pupils how public services operate and how they are held to account
- Model how perceived injustice can be peacefully challenged  
(UNICEF RRS Article 12 - Respect for the Views of the Child, Article 13 – Freedom of Expression, Article 14 – Freedom of Thought, Belief and Religion)

#### **The Rule of Law:**

- Ensure school rules and expectations are clear and fair
- Help pupils to distinguish right from wrong
- Help pupils to respect the law and the basis on which it is made

- Help pupils to understand that living under the rule of law protects individuals
- Include visits from the police in the curriculum
- Teach pupils aspects of both civil and criminal law and discuss how this might differ from some religious laws
- Develop restorative justice approaches to resolve conflicts  
(UNICEF RRS Article 29- Goals of Education, Article 17 – Access to information from the Media)

#### **Individual Liberty:**

- Support pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour, as well as knowing their rights
- Model freedom of speech through pupil participation, while ensuring protection of vulnerable pupils and promoting critical analysis of evidence
- Challenge stereotypes
- Implement a strong anti-bullying culture
- Follow the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child  
(UNICEF RRS Article 19 – Protection from violence, abuse and neglect, Article 12 - Respecting the Views of the Child, Article 29 – Goals of Education)

#### **Mutual Respect and Tolerance:**

- Promote respect for individual differences
- Help pupils to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, their own and other cultures and ways of life
- Challenge prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- Organise visits to places of worship
- Develop links with faith communities
- Develop critical personal thinking skills
- Discuss differences and similarities between people, such as those of faith, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality, and differences of family situations, such as looked-after children or young carers  
(UNICEF RRS Article 12 - Respect for the Views of the Child, Article 13 – Freedom of Expression, Article 14 – Freedom of Thought, Belief and Religion)

#### **Summary:**

All staff and students in St George’s Lower School are expected to behave with integrity, tolerance and compassion in their dealings with one another. We provide opportunities for all pupils not only to explore their own cultures but also to understand how these align with British values and how we can work together as a community for the greater good. Every member of the community has a part to play in enshrining the core values and beliefs so as to build a strong, united and democratic school. Where unfairness or bullying is found to exist, it will be routed out, and democracy and the rights of individuals will take centre stage.

Policy reviewed – March 2017

Next review – March 2018

#### **Further reading:**

- [Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils advice for independent schools](#)
- [Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils advice for independent schools \(updates to the advice November 2014\)](#)
- [Prevent Strategy](#)

- [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- **SGSE SEND Policy**
- **SGSE Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
- **SGSE Equality and Diversity Policy**
- **SGSE Lower School Behaviour Policy**
- **SGSE No Platform Policy**