



Promoting British Values in the Church of England school

Guidance from the
Diocesan Board of Education

August 2017

Introduction

The Diocesan Board of Education in its vision statement, which sets out a model for how we are seeking to live out the diocesan vision statement in church schools, states that our church schools should be distinctive, inclusive, effective and rooted. It sets out an expectation that our Church of England schools should be "rooted in Christian values" and that we should be aiming for these to be "lived out in all aspects of school / academy life." Historically, this is an area where we have given a lot of support to schools and they have been strong in offering education within the context of Christian values which have provided a framework for all involved in our church schools and provided a foundation on which to build relationships in the present and in the future. Alongside this, is now placed the government requirement to promote British Values as part of the education in all schools. Values education and moral development are a part of a school's holistic mission to contribute to the wellbeing of all people within our communities. The National Society document 'Valuing All God's Children' (2014) states that 'The core purpose of any Church school is to maximise the learning potential of every pupil within the love of God'. In November 2014, the Department for Education shared with all schools the need to promote 'British values' – Mutual Tolerance, Respectful attitudes, Democracy, The Rule of Law, Individual liberty - and they produced advice for doing so through SMSC. Ofsted now assess the way 'British values' are being developed both through the curriculum and through SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).

What is Ofsted doing?

Ofsted cover this aspect of school life under the effectiveness of leadership and management and specifically under SMSC (Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural development). Ofsted added 'British values' explicitly to the Social strand of SMSC in the School inspection handbook 2014 and it is reiterated in the August 2015 version paragraph 135.

'The social development of pupils is shown by their:

- *Acceptance and engagement with 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 pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain'*

In practice this means Ofsted are focusing on how effectively the school is 'preparing pupils for life in modern Britain'. They are also exploring the safeguarding issue of: 'Are pupils being protected from extremism and given information to challenge extreme practice?' Checks are also being made to see whether schools are meeting their obligations under the "Prevent Duty" which came into effect from 1st July 2015 under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism Act 2015. In order for schools to fulfil the "Prevent Duty" the act states that:

- *Schools must build pupil's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views.*

In its revised Framework for school inspection, Ofsted is clear that schools will struggle to be successful if they fail to deliver good SMSC, which now includes 'British values'.

School leaders must also demonstrate that they are addressing British values through the curriculum:

Inspectors will consider how well leadership and management ensure:

How well the school prepares pupils positively for life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith. (School Inspection Handbook – September 2015 paragraph 138)

What does this mean for our school?

There needs to be evidence that you are preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and that you have sufficiently robust systems in place to risk assess any opportunities for indoctrination.

Safeguarding

Schools have a responsibility to safeguard the children and young people in their care against radicalisation, extremism and terrorism and the procedures for doing this should be outlined in their safeguarding policy.

SMSC

Spiritual – Pupils/students are able to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different peoples faiths, feelings and values.

Moral – Pupils/students are able to recognise the difference between right and wrong and apply this understanding in their own lives, respecting the civil and criminal law of England.

Social – Pupils work and socialise with pupils/students from different religious, ethnic and socio economic backgrounds. They should show an acceptance of and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. They should develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes to fully participate in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

Cultural – Pupils/students show understanding of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others and the range of different cultures within school and further afield. They show interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity. The extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity is shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

(These requirements are taken from the latest Ofsted Handbook)

Questions to consider

Have the governing body recently reviewed the SMSC policy in the school so that it reflects the way the school is promoting British Values? (See diocesan guidelines for developing SMSC available on our website)

<http://southwell.anglican.org/education/schoolsacademies/policies-guidelines/>

How effective is your school in providing opportunities for every child/young person to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally?

Has the content of the PSHE curriculum been reviewed to see where work linked to British Values can be referenced or incorporated?

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- Ensure the effectiveness of the schools actions to prevent and tackle discriminatory behaviour and derogatory language on the grounds of sex, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- Understand, respond to and calculate risk effectively e.g. child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation, extremism

(The National Society document 'Valuing All God's Children', latest DfE Guidance on the Equality Act and The Prevent Duty may be useful for further reading.)

Question to consider

Has there been training for all staff (including ancillary staff) based around the National Society document outcomes? Should this be a priority for the coming school year?

Christian Values

If the school has a strong ethos based on Christian values that have been thought through and are embedded across the curriculum the school is probably preparing children for life in modern Britain. Ensuring those values are linked to biblical teaching and promoted through collective worship as well as the curriculum is paramount.

Questions to consider

Can you articulate the link from your Christian values to fundamental British values?

Can all members of the school community articulate the Christian basis for those values?

Religious Education

Excellent teaching of Religious Education will enable pupils/students to learn to think for themselves about British Values. The subject at whatever level, offers opportunities to build an accurate knowledge base about religions and human values, as well as hone interpersonal skills in classroom discussions.

- Mutual Tolerance – A baseline for a fair community is that each person's right to 'be themselves' is accepted by all. Whilst tolerance may not be enough, RE can challenge children and young people to be increasingly respectful and to celebrate diversity.
- Respectful attitudes – exploring diverse faiths and worldviews in RE lessons requires a positive attitude towards diversity. Disagreement and debate is possible in a positive space created through listening, learning and thinking about others in a respectful environment.
- Democracy – The RE classroom must be a democratic classroom where all pupils/students have an equal right to be heard. Democracy must be modelled by the teacher, and expected of every pupil/student.

- The rule of law – In RE pupils can examine different examples of codes for human life including commandments, rules or precepts offered by different religious communities.
- Individual liberty – In RE pupils/students can consider questions about identity and belonging, understanding themselves as situated in a particular cultural context by considering the cultural norms, rules, desires and pressures which restrain them and also by considering ways in which they are free.

(See 'Religious Education and British Values – Issues, opportunities and resources' pub. RE Today. Available from RE Today, price £15)

Question to consider

What role does RE play in your school in preparing pupils/students for life in modern and diverse Britain? Can it be strengthened?

Other actions your school might consider taking:

- Check your **school website**. This is where Ofsted will start. They will increasingly expect to see your taught curriculum up there. Does your website give evidence of how you are preparing pupils for life in modern Britain?
- Are Staff, SLT and governors clear about the '**new**' **language** being used? It is worth noting that in this case the ultimate responsibility stops with the governors, they will be deemed to have failed to ensure the SMSC development of pupils. They must be part of this conversation.
- **Make sure all staff understand the new emphasis** on British values in the curriculum, SMSC, and personal development, behaviour and welfare. Ofsted will see TA's as well as teaching staff. The taught curriculum is perhaps where we are most at risk in a rural context.
- Preparing pupils for life in modern Britain means making sure pupils are aware that we are **a multi-cultural, multi faith society**. There will be an expectation that pupils have meaningful experiences of diversity in the UK.
- Talk to one of the Diocesan Schools Advisers. They might be able to point you in the direction of other resources or tell you about our Faiths Roadshow event & the work of The St Philips Centre in Leicester who provide school visits to faith communities in the city of Leicester.
jane.lewis@southwell.anglican.org/anne.lumb@southwell.anglican.org
- Visit the Christian values4 schools website
<http://www.christianvalues4schools.co.uk/>

If an incident arises in a school where it is deemed radicalisation, extremism or terrorism has taken place, the school should contact the Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) via the Assistant to the Director Schools Chrissie.Goodridge-Ormston@southwell.anglican.org . The DDE will in turn inform other relevant senior staff including the Director of communications and an immediate co-ordinated response can then be made to the media and other appropriate bodies.