

Our promotion of British Values in school



The Department for Education states that there is a 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 Department for Education defines British Values as follows:

- Respect for democracy and support or participation in the democratic process
- Respect for the basis on which the law is made and applies in England
- Support for equality of opportunity for all
- Support and respect for the liberties of all within the law
- Respect for and tolerance of different faiths and religious and other beliefs

We ensure that the fundamental British Values are introduced, discussed and lived out through the ethos and work of the school. All curriculum areas provide a vehicle for furthering understanding of these concepts and, in particular, our character curriculum, RE, PSHE and Assemblies provide opportunities to deepen and develop understanding. We encourage our children to be creative, unique, open-minded and independent individuals, respectful of themselves and of others in our school, our local community and the wider world. We aim to nurture our children on their journey through life so they can grow into safe, caring, democratic, responsible and tolerant adults who make a positive difference to British Society and to the world.

At Morpeth First School, we also uphold and actively promote British values in the following ways:

Democracy

At Morpeth First School, children's awareness of democracy begins in the lower school, where younger children are given the opportunity to cultivate self-confidence and self-awareness, developing collaboration and decision making skills. As children mature, they are encouraged to work together, take turns and negotiate outcomes in both learning and play situations. Our pupils are able to put themselves forward to stand as school councillors at the beginning of each school year and elected pupils represent their classes wishes in many issues such as themes for charitable fundraising, ideas for local involvement, choosing playground equipment and evaluating learning opportunities. Pupil

questionnaires are completed each year, and from this, an action plan is devised.

Rule of Law

The importance of laws and rules, whether they are those that govern the class, the school or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout regular school days. Our system for behaviour is aligned to an agreed code.

Our school rules and our character values are deeply embedded in our work every day. Rules and expectations are clear, fair and regularly promoted. Each class also 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. Pupils are helped to distinguish right from wrong. Using our Character Champions, children are helped to distinguish right from wrong and are provided with appropriate role models to help them to choose the right path. Pupils are helped to respect the law. They 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. Children are clear on the function and implementation of the behaviour policy. The Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies encourage the restorative justice process to resolve conflict. The school has zero-tolerance for any form of aggression, abuse or violence, which extends to pupils, staff and parents/carers.

We are committed to praising children's efforts. Children are rewarded not only for achievement in curriculum areas, but also for behaviour. Rewards are given in the form of stickers, house points and certificates. Children's achievements are also recognised during Celebration Assemblies. Each term children and staff nominate children to receive one of our Character Awards representing each of our character values.

Equality of Opportunity

At Morpeth First School we believe that positive actions are fundamental in ensuring all stakeholders in our school have equal chance to achieve, participate and fulfil their roles in school and the wider community. Equality for all helps us to develop a sense of identity, social justice and to be successful as individuals, as a school and as a community.

We understand equity to mean treating everyone fairly and with dignity and by valuing their individual characteristics such as age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

We further understand that people have different needs, situations and goals and some people may experience additional barriers and challenges.

Assemblies tackle issues involving prejudices and prejudice-based bullying. We invite charities into school such as Age Concern and we are in contact with local residential homes, giving the children the opportunity to cultivate intergenerational awareness. We regularly support local food banks and children choose charitable and community projects to become involved with. All children have equal access to the curriculum and we run a range of extra-curricular clubs available to all.

Individual Liberty

We invest a great deal of time in creating a positive culture in our school so that children feel that they are in a safe environment where choices and freedoms are encouraged. Through our Character and PHSE curriculum, children are encouraged to build a positive sense of themselves, reflecting on their behaviour and achievements and the outcomes of choices that they have made and how these impact on others. Pupils are empowered to make informed, safe, moral choices recognising not only their own right to liberty, but understanding that others have that right too. Assemblies regularly focus on the issues faced by others in our wider society, for example homelessness, refugees and victims of conflict.

Mutual respect and Tolerance of those with different Faiths and Beliefs

Children are encouraged to treat others as they would wish to be treated themselves. They learn how to be part of a community, manage their feelings and form relationships. The school has an ethos of inclusivity where different views, faiths and cultures are valued. We follow the Northumberland RE syllabus which gives the children the opportunity to learn about different faiths. We strongly believe that tolerance relies on understanding and we have interfaith and cultural events and visitors where we give children the opportunity to explore the main ideas behind different religions and cultures as well as visit places of cultural and religious interest in the locality. We are part of the E-Twinning community which gives the children chance to communicate and share learning with schools across Europe as well as develop understanding of different cultures. Our anti-Bullying week ensures that children are equipped to recognise their role in challenging bullying and antisocial behaviours.