



British Values

The Department for Education have recently emphasised the important role that British values can play in education and 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 Government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, and these values were reiterated in 2014. At Victoria Lane, British Values are promoted in much of what we do, during school assemblies, Religious Education and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) sessions. 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 British values we promote are not unique to Britain. Below are just a few examples of how we promote British values. The first section is a general overview; the others are specific expectations set out by Ofsted.

Being Part of Britain

As a school, we value and celebrate the heritages of everybody at Victoria Lane. Alongside this, we value and celebrate living in, and being part of, Britain. In general terms, this means that we celebrate traditions and customs in the course of the year; for example, Harvest Festival during the autumn term; Remembrance Day; our annual Christmas celebration at Christmas; Easter, etc. We also value and celebrate national events such as the recent royal wedding! Children also learn about being part of Britain from different perspectives. Two specific examples of when we teach about being part of Britain are:

Geographically: Our rivers, coasts and seaside topics ensure that children have a better understanding of what Britain is, learning more about:

- its coasts, rivers and mountains
- where Britain is in relation to the rest of Europe and other countries in the world

Historically: Key moments in British history are studied in the topics such as the Great Fire of London, the World Wars and significant historical figures such Guy Fawkes and Winston Churchill.

Democracy

Children, parents and staff have many opportunities for their voices to be heard at Victoria Lane Academy. Democracy is central to how we operate.

- Election of school council – each class votes for their own 2 representatives. They are then involved in regular meetings and provide a 'pupil voice'.
- Pupils have also voted on how to spend funds raised by the Friends of School. Recent investment was made in playground equipment, following requests from pupils.
- Pupils have worked with Taylor Shaw, our school meal providers, to look at and decide on future menus.

Pupils are always listened to by adults and are taught to listen carefully and with concern 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.

Parents' opinions are welcomed at Victoria Lane Academy through methods such as questionnaires and surveys.

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. Pupils are taught from an early age the rules of the school. At the start of the school



year, each class discusses the school rules and class routines, 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

To encourage and promote good behaviour, attitude and work, we have devised a reward system which is consistently followed throughout the school. We are committed to praising children's efforts. We endeavour to praise the children informally, individually, during group work, in front of the whole class and the whole school.

Children are rewarded not only for achievement in curriculum areas, but for behaviour and general adherence to the school or class rules. Rewards are given in the form of stickers, certificates and other prizes. Children's achievements are recognised during our weekly praise assembly.

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, we provide boundaries for our pupils to make choices safely. For example:

- choices about what learning challenge or activity they will complete
- choices about how they record their learning
- choices around the participation in extra-curricular activities

Our pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are taught how to exercise these safely, such as in our e-safety and PSHE lessons. They also understand that with rights come responsibilities.

Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Bishop Auckland is culturally diverse and we are proud to promote and celebrate our different backgrounds and beliefs. Tolerance, politeness and mutual respect are at the heart of our aims and ethos.

Our pupils are able to live and work alongside people from all backgrounds and cultures. This will be particularly necessary in a future where due to technological advances will make the 'world a smaller place.'

Our pupils know and understand that it is expected that respect is shown to everyone and to everything, whatever differences we may have. Children learn that their behaviour choices have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community are encouraged to treat each other with respect.

Specific examples of how we at Victoria Lane Academy enhance pupils' understanding and respect for different faiths and beliefs are:

- through Religious Education, PSHE and other lessons where we develop awareness and appreciation of other cultures including visiting places of worship that are important to different faiths
- in English through fiction
- in art and music by considering cultures from other parts of the world
- across the curriculum, providing pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view in English, history, geography, PSHE, etc
- celebrating cultural differences through assemblies, themed days and displays.

Whilst instances contrary to our values are relatively rare, no school can guarantee that there will never be instances which are contrary to our values. Each is treated seriously in line with our policies and expectations.

