

British Values and Christian Values

“It shouldn’t take any intervention from my department to say that young people should be learning the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, tolerance and respect - because these British values are fundamentally a good thing. Fundamental British values are the attributes that have in this century and the last, made our country one of the greatest forces for good. They’re the values that bind us together, that mean despite the many differences in our nation, we’re united as one people... so I’m unapologetic in saying that no school should be exempt from promoting fundamental British values, just as no school should be exempt from promoting rigorous academic standards.”

Rt Hon Nicky Morgan *Why Knowledge Matters, 27th January 2015*

“The Bible has helped to give Britain a set of values and morals which make Britain what it is today.”

David Cameron



The requirement for schools to prepare pupils for modern life with a focus on British values is relatively new, but Church schools have long been familiar with the need to articulate their fundamental Christian values. Both sets of values overlap and one can clearly argue that the government’s stated British values have emerged from Britain’s long history as a Christian nation.

The key Christian beliefs that underpin both Christian Values and British Values are that:

- God is a God of order, and that his world should reflect a sense of purpose, not chaos.
- Every person is made in the image of God, known, loved and valued as a unique creation.
- Humans are designed to be interdependent, supporting others and being supported, like a body with many parts.
- The Bible provides laws to govern human affairs, but these also show up human weakness and the need for forgiveness.
- The greatest command is to love - God, oneself, one’s neighbour and even one’s enemy - and, for a Christian, to love as Christ loved us.

The Bible and British Values

The following Bible passages and stories can be linked to the British value headings.

Democracy

- “See I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction now choose life that you and your children may live.” Deuteronomy 30 v.15-19
- Calling the disciples. Matthew 4 v.18-21
- The quarrel about who should sit at Jesus right and left hand in heaven. Matthew 20 v.20-23

Rule of Law

- “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.” Romans 13 v.1
- Jesus teaches about the law. Matthew 5 v.17-20
- Paying taxes to Caesar. Luke 20 v.21-25
- Be “in” the world not “of” the world. Isaiah 2,3,11
- The wisdom of Solomon. 1 Kings 3 v.16-28
- Zacchaeus. Luke 9 v.1-10
- Moses and the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20 v.1-20
- Jesus’ new commandment. John 13 v.34

Individual liberty

- Christ has set us free. Galatians 5 v.1
- The truth sets us free. John 8 v.32
- Adam and Eve – free to do wrong. Genesis 2 v. 3
- Ten Lepers freed from the constraints of their illness. Luke 17 v.11-19
- Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane debating duty. Matthew 26 v.36-46
- The rich young man imprisoned by his own riches. Matthew 19 v.16-22
- The two builders and choosing your lifestyle. Matthew 7 v.24-27



Mutual respect

- Be devoted to one another, love one another above yourselves. Romans 12 v.10
- We are made in the image of God. Genesis 1 v.27
- Good Samaritan freely helps his enemy. Luke 10 v.29-37
- Creation is good. Genesis chapter 1
- The soldier's unexpected faith in a "subject" teacher. Luke 7 v.1-10
- Mary and Martha, the importance of listening to others. Luke 10 v.38-41
- Jesus washed the disciples' feet like the lowliest servant. John 13 v.1-20
- Story of Ruth, respect for relatives and for the poor. Ruth 1-4

Tolerance of different cultures and religions

- Do not judge others and you will not be judged. Matthew 7 v.1
- Naaman learns respect for other nations. 2 Kings 5
- Good Samaritan. Luke 10 v.29-37
- Jesus and the children his disciples tried to push away. Matthew 19 v.13-15
- The woman at the well, despised by her village yet Jesus got into a theological debate with her. John 4 v.1-26

In a C of E school, British Values should cause us to ask:	Teaching about British Values relates to our growing understanding of Christian Values such as:	Remembering what Christians believe, and putting it into practice, helps us understand British values better...	What do we do at St Matthew's to promote British Values?
Democracy: <i>How do we give everyone an equal right to be heard and a shared responsibility to play a positive part in our school community?</i>	• Justice • Responsibility • Trust • Service • Respect • Courage • Truthfulness	Humans are designed to be inter-dependent and everyone has a role to play. For Christians, our role is to be part of a body, working together and governed by Christ, the head of the 'body'.	• Accessible and approachable leadership team. • School Council with pupils of all ages. • Church School Council with year group representatives. • Working Parties that include all stakeholders. • Annual questionnaires and surveys. • ClassDojo facilities communication, including EAL families. • Circle time and PSHE lessons. • Highlight the development of democratic ideas in History lessons. • Ensure all pupils are listened to by adults. • Invite MPs and other speakers to the school. • Encourage service to the school and to the community. eg. litter pick, fundraising.
The Rule of Law <i>How do we help all members of the school community understand the idea that the right rules permit well-being, safety and harmony?</i>	• Justice • Responsibility • Trust • Forgiveness • Respect • Wisdom • Peace	Christians respect the Ten Commandments, and other laws in the Bible, which model right ways to live. They know rules are hard to keep and that they reveal a human propensity to sin or shortcomings. They speak of God's mercy and forgiveness but know they should not use this as an excuse to break laws.	• Whole school rules are regularly revisited and reviewed. • Class routines and rules are devised together. • Clear behaviour policy which is understood by all. • Organise visits from the police / Bikeability • Highlight God's rules in RE eg.10 commandments, and relate to everyday events. • Link moral values to aspects of civic and political life happening in the news. • Use resources such as Newsround to discuss and highlight relevant, topical issues.

Individual Liberty <i>How do we enable every individual in our school community to act on the belief that they have dignity and freedom as a unique and valued individual?</i>	• Responsibility • Service • Respect • Wisdom • Hope • Creativity • Courage	The Bible portrays humans as individuals free to make their own choices about life and behaviour; this includes the ability to choose to do wrong. Humans are not robots but made in the ‘image of God’, able to make decisions, to choose to love and do right; this freedom brings risks and responsibilities.	• Curriculum drivers which include aspiration and creativity. • Encourage pupils to be independent and creative in their learning. • Provide pupils with opportunities for personal reflection, especially in PSHE and Collective Worship. • Discuss moral issues in PSHE, History and RE. • ELSA nurture support as necessary. • TLG coaching programme. • Give encouragement and support to express personal aspirations and goals. • Create opportunities for pupils to realise they are significant, unique and precious individuals.
Mutual Respect <i>How do we reward the ability to see the good in others and the use of positive words, attitudes and actions which build up all in our school community?</i>	• Respect • Friendship • Humility • Forgiveness • Perseverance • Thankfulness • Generosity	Jesus said the two great commands were to love God and love your neighbour as you love yourself. It is important to understand our own value as those created and loved by God; and then to realise that others are also created in God’s image and valued by Him. We should strive to see not just the best in others but to see ‘God’ in others. We should love one another as Christ has loved us. St Paul encourages Christians in his letters to use our words and actions to build others up, not pull them down or apart.	• Whole school rule... “We are kind and respectful”. • Diversity in the Curriculum initiative. • Celebration Assemblies that involve the whole school. • Promote respect for others in all personal interactions, modelled consistently by staff. • Reinforce the value of everyone’s opinions in class debates and discussions. • Effective Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy. • Emphasise in RE and PSHE the belief that every person is unique. eg. Celebrating Difference (Jigsaw) • Build active educational links with other schools, including pupils of different cultural backgrounds. • Support charities but not in such a way as to encourage feelings of superiority / inferiority. • Participate in a range of social activities and educational visits in the community. • Value different ways of communicating - really listening. • Value the home and cultural backgrounds of learners. • Understand the concepts of privacy and personal space

Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs <i>How do we actively celebrate diversity in our school community, modelling tolerance, and the ability to listen with respect and to disagree without rancour?</i>	• Respect • Friendship • Compassion • Humility • Peace • Trust • Forgiveness	The Bible teaches that we are all unique creations loved by God. It follows that because we are unique, we are not all alike and have to learn to live with difference. Everyone has a right to dignity and respect as a human being but that does not mean that all ideas are equally right or good. Christians should speak up for what is right and not tolerate injustice. Where people differ in culture, there is room for joy in diversity. Where there is difference in belief and faith, there is always room for love and respect even if agreement is not possible.	• Diversity in the Curriculum initiative. • 'Around the World' - storytelling initiative in assemblies. • Celebrate festivals such as Diwali. • Wide range of multicultural resources and books in school. • RE is a valued and popular subject, taught by experienced teachers and well resourced. • Show how Jesus encouraged love for those others rejected in his life and teachings. eg. Parable of the Good Samaritan • Prejudice Related Incidents are taken seriously and protocol followed. • Ensure debate about the meaning of 'tolerance'. • Offer practice for pupils in learning how to disagree well. • Show respect on visits to places of worship and in Collective Worship. • Meet and interact well with a wide variety of people from different contexts and share experiences with them. eg. Sports events, Arts Week.
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