

## British Values Statement

British values are defined by the Department for Education as:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

These are implicitly embedded in Steiner education and therefore in the curriculum and ethos of Elmfield School. All staff are expected to uphold and promote these values. Listed below are some of the ways in which staff work with these values at the school.

### **Democracy: making decisions together**

Throughout the school, staff will encourage children to see their role as an individual within a bigger social structure, ensuring that the children know their views count, that they value each other's views and values and are able to talk about their feelings. Class plays, Games and Dancing lessons and Choir as well as many other group activities give plenty of opportunities for children to practise their social skills. On our many class trips, pupils learn to balance their own wish for freedom with the needs of the group.

The Class 5 curriculum covers the origins of democracy and its importance as a concept and principle, and this is met again in more depth in later main lessons as well as in GCSE History.

In older classes staff can demonstrate democracy in action, for example, by helping a class to agree on a decision through a vote, or holding a mock election to teach students about the electoral system in the UK. The upper school council is a further example of this. Group decision-making is a central facet of our Castle Award and Duke of Edinburgh Award lessons in Classes 7-9.

Staff can support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children should be given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

The College of Teachers at Elmfield is itself a body of people who make decisions together.

## **The rule of law: understanding that rules matter**

Staff will help children to understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and to distinguish right from wrong. Staff sometimes collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviour and ensure that all children understand that rules apply to everyone. Our Behaviour and Discipline Policy is of central importance in the school and is explained to the children at the start of each year so that they understand our expectations. Through application of the policy they learn that there are consequences if rules are not followed.

Games played in the playground are sometimes subject to rules set by adults but often the rules are developed by the children through negotiation with each other, and we encourage this approach.

Stories told as part of the curriculum in Classes 1-3 provide imaginative understanding of moral and social practice, good and evil, justice and redemption. In Class 6 the study of the Romans gives a wonderful opportunity to consider the importance of the rule of law, and this is also a theme for Religion lessons.

## **Individual liberty: freedom for all**

At Elmfield we encourage children to develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff can provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing them to take appropriate risks (e.g. tree climbing), to develop their creative self-expression through music, drama, Eurythmy, art and craft, talking about their experiences and learning through various forms of safe and constructive feedback.

Staff encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand that everyone is free to have different opinions.

## **Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated**

Elmfield School promotes an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where differing views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and where children are encouraged to engage with the wider community through acts of community such as litter picking and carol singing at a local old people's home. Volunteering is a key component of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme which we run at Elmfield, and in 2015 our first pupils are completing their National Citizen Service as well.

Children should acquire a tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences. We are open to celebrating festivals from all religions at Elmfield, and often do this with help from parents of pupils with

different faiths. All students learn two languages from the age of 6, and the curriculum covers cultural aspects as well as the study of the language. Every year in the upper school we welcome several boarders from overseas, and we have a mutually beneficial partnership with a school in Germany which enables students from both schools to spend a fortnight living with a family in a different country and experiencing a different way of life.

Staff will encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other's opinions. Staff are expected to promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

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