

Background and Rationale

Though it has acquired a greater urgency in recent months, the importance of schools espousing British values is not new:

The DfE have recently 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 have been reiterated by the Prime Minister this year.

The Prevent Strategy recognises the importance of schools in counter-terrorism activities. More recently, concerns about the inappropriate actions of some schools were highlighted in the Birmingham Trojan Horse case, where a number of OFSTED inspections revealed a failure to promote British values adequately in some schools, meaning that young people in them were vulnerable to radical and extremist ideas. Consequently, all schools need a clear statement of British values and how they are promoted through the school’s curriculum.

What is meant by “British Values”?

We believe that the following list exemplifies some of the values held dear by British citizens:

- Democracy
- Respect of the rule of law
- Appreciation of the rights of other citizens
- Individual liberty
- The promotion of opportunities for all
- Support for those who cannot, by themselves, sustain a dignified life-style
- Religious tolerance and respect for cultural diversity
- Treating others with fairness
- Participation in community life
- The contribution to, as well as the benefit from, cultural and economic resources

Although this list is not exhaustive, we believe it encapsulates the attitudes Rainford High School values and seeks to fix in the minds of its young people.

How does Rainford High School promote British Values?

DEMOCRACY

- Students have the opportunity to contribute more widely to school life through our “Student Voice”. Every tutor group is given the opportunity to elect a member to the body whereby students meet with senior leaders to discuss their learning and ideas.

THE RULE OF LAW

- At Rainford High we promote the importance of the rule of law. Students see that this is important through our day to day work. Accountability is stressed to all stakeholders including staff (teacher’s standards and performance management), students (“non-negotiables” as set out in the school’s behaviour policy) and Governors.

INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

- As a school we educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment. Students are actively encouraged to make appropriate choices. As students move through the school, privileges are gained such as, in year 11, students do not need to queue for entrance to the canteen at lunchtime and 6th form are allowed to leave the site at times such as break and lunch. Students are offered guided autonomy over choices regarding future pathways.

MUTUAL RESPECT

- Our school ethos is “Everyone matters, Everyone helps and Everyone succeeds.” Through this we strive to foster strong working relationships between staff and students, between colleagues and between staff and parents. A positive understanding of differences and willingness to listen to the views of others is embedded in our daily practices.
- Behaviour Policies promote good behaviour and challenge poor behaviour so that all students respect others and give them the opportunity to succeed. We take seriously our duty to prevent victimisation of any individual and we carefully analyse any incidents where racist, homophobic or sexist actions could hurt others.

TOLERANCE OF THOSE OF DIFFERENT FAITHS AND BELIEFS

- Rainford High is situated in an area which is not greatly culturally diverse, therefore we place a great emphasis on promoting diversity with the children. Assemblies are regularly planned to address this issue either directly or through the inclusion of stories and celebrations from a variety of faiths and cultures. Assemblies and discussions involving prejudices and prejudice-based bullying have been supported by learning in RE and PSHE. . Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school. There are visits, trips and opportunities for students to learn all about other faiths, creeds and cultures not just in this country but around the world.

British values are embodied in the following more specific ways:

- Our school’s motto is “Everyone matters, Everyone helps and Everyone succeeds” All students are regularly spoken to about the importance of these three attributes for success in school. Explanations of each of the three points are provided visually all around the school for the benefit of our community and for visitors.
- All our students study RE from Year 7 -9 with RED days in year 10 and 11.
- Each curriculum area is aware of and includes British values in its SMSC teaching.
- Students participate in weekly PHSE lessons during form time
- Religious studies: Philosophy and ethics is offered as an option for A Level study
- Assemblies, held every week, focus on many of these identified elements.
- Annual year 10 visit to the Houses of Parliament.
- The school’s system of organising students into one of four houses encourages involvement of every pupil in school life.
- Student Councils encourages active participation in the school community.
- The school supports local, national and international charities, such as the money raised and work done for Ghana.
- Each year group supports and raises money for a specific charity.

At Rainford High School we believe that our ethos of “Everyone matters, Everyone helps and Everyone succeeds” makes explicit our fundamental belief in many of these values. This statement is the foundation of all our work with our students.