

IRIS SCHOOL

British Values & Community Cohesion Policy

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy sets out the framework of values that underpin the school's approach to "British Values" and to preparing students for life in British society. It also addresses the ways in which we teach such issues, and promote understanding and respect between Islam and other faiths.

ETHOS, PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES

The ethos of the school is expressed as:

"The school is inclusive, open on an equal basis to all Muslim children of any particular strain or affiliation in Islam. The school engenders an ethos which offers due respect for differing faiths, traditions, beliefs and practices including those within the Islamic tradition. The teaching of Islam is a fundamental element of the school, respecting all strands and traditions of that faith and the school aims to offer educational experiences at all levels within a unique Islamic ethos, augmented by the teaching of wider multiculturalism and modern-day British values"

OTHER FAITH TRADITIONS

We also see it as our responsibility to ensure students are educated about the major faiths of the UK and the world, and can hear at first hand from representatives of those faiths. This is an expression of the Quranic ayat:

'O mankind! Behold, we have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another...' (49:13).

This is also part of the necessary preparation of our students for life in British society and the wider world. By encountering other faiths and beliefs, we also gain deeper knowledge and understanding of our tradition and may come to appreciate it all the more.

BRITISH VALUES

IRIS School is a part of the Islamic community, is proud to be part of British society and recognizes the privilege of freedom this represents. We consider that 'British values' as the term is used in educational debates are coterminous with 'Islamic values': democracy and the rule of law, freedom and responsibility, equality and respect are at heart of both systems, and the strong traditions of Islam enhance and reinforce the laws of Britain. We endorse the Islamic principles of "the law of the land is the law".

TOLERANCE OR RESPECT

The school regards the aim of pluralism as not merely tolerance but respect. Public support for faith schools – financially and politically – rests on their being able not only to promote a particular religious identity but also to support community cohesion. It is not enough for students simply to acknowledge the existence of other faiths or other traditions of Islam; community cohesion rests on

them understanding and respecting the beliefs of others, being willing to enter imaginative into other worlds views and value systems, and seeking common ground as well as celebrating difference.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The values outlined above are woven into the experience of students and staff in various ways:

THE FORMAL CURRICULUM

Opportunities exist across the curriculum for explicit learning about British Values and the importance of respect for other's views. For example:

- **PSHE:** the curriculum includes treatment of multiculturalism, community, culture and identity, rights and responsibilities, bullying, British democratic institutions and processes the rule of law, prejudice and discrimination.
- **Topic:** students study the history of Britain; world history and make-up of the world around them, the geography and topics including war and its impact.

THE INFORMAL CURRICULUM

Students learn and experience in various ways also, including the following:

- A visit to several different places of worship.
- Our Student Council, School House System and related activities give opportunities for the student voice to be heard and acted upon. The views of students are taken formally into account by the Head teacher. Elections are held annually across the whole school.
- A Charity Fitness Week exposes students to a range of voluntary organisations; they then vote on which charities should be the focus for fundraising efforts for the year and raise funds through a focused week with follow-through action at home and in the community.

SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies make clear the school's commitment to equality, diversity and mutual respect

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Equalities Statement
- SMSC Policy

EVALUATION

The school's work in this area is kept under review by the Governing Body. Success is monitored through behavior reports, surveys of all stakeholders, learning reviews and the normal self-evaluation systems of the school.

Date: Aug 2024