

British Values



TEACHING AND PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES AT WEST HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

At West Hill Primary we understand that the society we live in is diverse and therefore, our curriculum and life within school reflects this. For our pupils, we aim to continually weave the thread of social, cultural, moral and spiritual British values throughout day to day school life. This has been something that we have been doing at West Hill for the past two years. We aim to build a community that is cohesive and that challenges any ideology that seeks to undermine that cohesion. Underpinning this are the values and understanding of democracy, law, individual liberty, respect, tolerance, tradition and heritage. The 'Equality Act 2010' protects all individuals from discrimination and it is the schools duty to ensure that all individuals have equal access and opportunity to all that is on offer. Funding, including that for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, is used to target inequalities, to ensure equality.

The DfE has 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 (2014). Copies of the 2011 Prevent Strategy can be found in the school staffroom.

West Hill Primary School has a stated ethos based on 'care', 'tolerance', 'trust' and 'respect' and there are banners in the school illustrating these words. Our ethos is truly lived out, a fact which is always commented on positively by visitors to the school.

'Learning Today for the World of Tomorrow'

West Hill Primary School is a happy, secure, friendly and welcoming school, with a true family atmosphere, in which all staff and pupils are positive, caring and optimistic - and they smile! The staff, governors and pupils alike enjoy what they do and do it very well. Our school community has high expectations, both in terms of achievement and behaviour, and everyone is expected to do their best and to use their special gifts and talents, at their own particular level. At West Hill Primary School, all members of the school family and the contributions they make to the school are greatly valued. Courtesy and politeness is expected at all times, and people are always acknowledged and thanked for what they do. 'Care', 'tolerance', 'trust' and 'respect' are very important to us. Our ethos is also based on our **SMILE Learning Trust Co-operative Values of: self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, solidarity and, as Co-operative members, we believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.**



As a 'Sustainable School', we teach our children to care for themselves, for others and for their environment.

Our Headteacher's vision and goal is to achieve:

"Excellence in teaching and learning, achieved through an enjoyable and professional whole community team effort following clearly defined goals, which recognises and values the uniqueness and achievement of every child, and respects the dignity of all."

Please see also our Policy for Promoting Community Cohesion.

At West Hill Primary School British Values, our ethos and our SMILE Learning Trust Co-operative values are at the heart of all that we do and are reinforced regularly and in the following ways:

Democracy

Pupil Voice is important at West Hill Primary School and staff listen to the children.

The children decide upon their class rules and the rights associated with this. They have their own version of the Mission Statement and Aims and their own version of the Governors' Anti-Bullying Policy. Each class votes for two school council representatives which gives every class a say on the decisions that are made in our school. The council meets every week to discuss any issues raised in School Council meetings. The School Council writes a termly newspaper and is genuinely able to effect change within our school. Year 6 children are 'buddies' to the new children in Reception Class and other classes buddy together for specific activities.

There is an active Eco Team which monitors our environmental work, including reading meters, composting, working on grounds initiatives and maintaining our school as litter free. The Team represents the school during assessments for our Eco-Schools Green Flags.

Our PSHE curriculum encourages all aspects of respect for democracy and the democratic process. Individual children are also appointed for posts of responsibility in the classroom. For example, there are Librarians running the Library, Digital Leaders who lead on important matters such as Internet Safety, Sports Leaders who organise a variety of games and sports, Playground Leaders who manage playtime games rotas and lead activities, and House Captains (one boy and one girl from each of our four Houses).

All children complete an annual questionnaire where they are able to put forward their views about the school. Views are sought from parents and the wider community, through questionnaires. The community is at the heart of the school and local issues are raised, discussed and acted upon. Children are invited to do presentations at Residents Association events and Parish Council meetings and the school has strong links with local clubs such as the West Hill Bridge Club and Garden Club.

Children are taught about democracy in this country and how it differs from other countries, including through history topics such as Ancient Greece. Levels of government and the voting system are explored. Imperfections in the democratic system are discussed. Children have an understanding of how citizens can influence decision making, both locally and nationally. Elections are discussed, in the context of the democratic process. Non democratic systems are explored and contrasts made.

Children know what is on the news locally, nationally and internationally and discuss it. Class 5 and 6 receive a weekly newspaper called 'First News' especially written for children. Topical articles in this and across the News are discussed as part of the curriculum. The school actively seeks to engage children in discussions about anti-social behaviour and gang culture, in a safe forum.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws, whether they are those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced at West Hill Primary. Pupils are taught the rules, known as 'Golden Rules' from an early age in the Early Year's Foundation Stage. Each class has an agreed set of rules and a behaviour contract. The children are aware of the consequences of not following the rules in their school community. The children learn to understand the difference between right and wrong in all aspects of school life throughout the day. There is an opportunity for children to put right what has been done wrong, wherever possible and, in rare cases of bullying a restorative justice approach is used as appropriate. There are clear policies for 'Positive Behaviour and Discipline', 'Anti-Bullying' and 'Ethnic Diversity and Race Relations'. There are also clear policies for Disability Equality, Special Educational Needs and Gender Equality. Children are given the opportunity to understand aspects of civil and criminal law and discuss how this might be different from some religious laws.

Pupils in our school expect and receive a fair system where actions are always respectfully justified. Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind rules and laws: that they exist to govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Children look at threats to the rule of law, on an international, national and local level. Community cohesion is explored and its importance taught. Gang culture is discussed at local level along with ways to avoid becoming involved with it. Crimes associated with being in a gang are explored, with reference to local and national issues. Crime is discussed in a safe environment and in an age appropriate way, as a threat to the rule of law and community cohesion. The democratic nature of law making is made explicit. Children are taught age related law, eg the age of criminal culpability, age for driving, voting etc.

School visits from authorities such as the community police and fire service further reinforce the rule of law. Class 6 take part in a day of Life Skills run by the Police to help reinforce the message further. Children are involved in road safety issues within the village and learn about local government through decisions made by the Parish and Town Council.

Individual Liberty

At West Hill Primary School, our pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for young pupils to make informed choices, through a safe environment and an empowering education. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our e-Safety programme, PSHE lessons and assemblies.

Our children are encouraged to give their opinions and share these ideas with due regard for the feelings of others and share our specific school values of Care, Tolerance, Trust and Respect. Children understand that their right to their own opinion is tempered by their duty to do what their parents and the school want them to do. Children have a right to be listened to and great value is placed on this. Children know that there is freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs and that this is protected by law. Children also know that there are limits to individual liberty, for example racism and homophobic behaviour are not tolerated.

As part of our curriculum, we place a huge emphasis on the social and emotional learning of our children and feel we send them off to secondary school as well rounded individuals, ready to undertake the next stage of their learning and life. Our close links with local secondary schools support children, and further promote a sense of being in a community. We celebrate achievements both in and out of school in assemblies, through certificates and by following a personalised approach. We know our children really well and they know they are part of community. All of the children have access to the staff for Inclusion when necessary. This helps the children access support in a confidential and supportive way through conferencing or informal chats.

In addition, we are part of a local Learning Community of six schools which work closely together to provide the best for our children, including joint projects and 'pupil voice conferences' on local issues such as the environment.

Our Learning Community Vision Statement is:

Ottery St. Mary Learning Community is 'a family of like-minded schools working together as a community of learning to improve the life chances of the children within our care, and to celebrate their successes.'

Mutual Respect

Mutual respect is at the heart of our values. Respect is one of the four most important words in our school ethos. Children learn that their behaviours have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect. This is an absolute expectation and forms the basis of our ethos, aims and vision statement. The school's motto is 'Learning Today for the World Tomorrow' and everybody understands their responsibilities within this. Children are expected to demonstrate good manners and courtesy to everybody and this is celebrated. Children often represent the school within the wider community and understand their responsibilities towards everybody. The school actively seeks to promote mutual respect within the whole community, with links to the older members of the local area, local enterprise and pre-school.

The school has further links with schools in different contexts, ie South Tottenham, Jamaica, France and The Solomon Islands and works to promote respect for everybody. We also work closely with our SMILE Learning Trust Partner, Ottery Primary School, and the other primary schools in our Learning Community. The school, through its Curriculum, teaches respect for and makes comparisons between other countries and cultures in the world. For example, life in India is taught in Year 1 and Key Stage 1's project on 'Around the World in 80 Days' teaches children about a variety of cultures. Environmental musical productions such as 'Yanomamo' and 'Ocean World' teach children about our important role as stewards of the planet as well as respect for all living things. Joint visits by staff are planned to some of our partner schools.

Tolerance of those of different Faiths and Beliefs

We actively promote diversity through our celebrations of different faiths and cultures. Religious Education lessons and PSHE lessons reinforce messages of tolerance and respect for others. Members of different faiths and religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school. The children visit places of worship that are important to different faiths, such as the Synagogue. Throughout school life the children are encouraged to discuss differences between people such as their faith, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. They also discuss differences in family life such as looked after children or young carers. Family celebrations form an important part of our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

International and national failures in tolerance throughout history are discussed. Children have an understanding of the importance of combatting discrimination, and this is explored locally, nationally and internationally. Children understand that being British is about living with a wide range of people, from different backgrounds and that understanding the uniqueness of this has value for community cohesion, and world peace.

British Traditions and Heritage

We celebrate the role of Britain both historically and in the present. We want pupils to have knowledge of and be proud of their British heritage and the cultural and historical traditions that we are renowned for the world over. This involves recognising or celebrating royal events, Remembrance Day, festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter (alongside those from other cultures such as Eid, Diwali and Chinese New Year, for example). The school recognises St George's Day and any other Saints days. Our history, music and art curricula, in particular, provide important ways in which we teach and celebrate British History and culture. We have achieved the prestigious Artsmark Gold Award three times and ensure that the 'arts' which encompass British and other cultures, feature highly in our curriculum work.

We have a strong tradition of environmental and sustainability work at the school and have been awarded four Eco-School Green Flags. We are also a Forest School which teaches children about the great outdoors as well as essential life skills. We appreciate how lucky we are that our school is situated in such a lovely rural setting and we always try to make the best possible use of our beautiful grounds for learning.

We have a traditional and highly successful 'house' system which teaches the children the value of working together, teamwork and supporting one another. Our 'houses' are named after the four original large houses in West Hill: Bendarroch, Elsdon, Moorland and Warren. Children earn house points for good deeds and good work, represent their house on Sports Day and participate in house events with our SMILE Learning Trust partner school, Ottery St. Mary Primary, with the two schools' respective houses linked through house colours: Bendarroch (green), Elsdon (yellow), Moorland (red) and Warren (blue). Ottery Primary School's houses are also named after the original large houses in the town.

All children are taught the national anthem. The children visit places of cultural significance including museums, historical Exeter and market and coastal towns, looking at the buildings and history of lifeboat stations for example. In addition, sporting events celebrate British traditions and heritage, as well as the Olympics. Tea and mince pies are served at concerts and other events throughout the year. We have a Cultural Week celebrating the cultures of different parts of the world and are introducing a 'British Week' to look specifically at British Values, that seeks to involve the whole community.

We work tirelessly to build a culture that will stand the test of time, where our pupils can become good, effective citizens who make a positive contribution to society. We teach our children to respect everyone regardless of any differences. Our home school agreement encourages partnership with our families, and we work very hard to involve everybody in the life of the school.

Through our curriculum and ethos, we always seek to develop our teaching of British Values further and look at different ways of celebrating what is inherently British, whilst recognising our brothers and sisters from other cultures.