

British Values and our Catholic Ethos

The Government has set out its definition of 'British values', designed to prevent extremism and religious radicalisation, to be **democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs**. The promotion of 'British values' is central to Catholic education because British values have their origin in the Christian values of our nation.

'We are proud that Catholic schools promote values that are both Catholic and British, including: respect for the individual, democracy, liberty, respect, tolerance and inclusiveness. Our schools promote cohesion by serving more ethnically diverse and poorer communities. Schools provide high standards of education which are popular with parents from all social, economic and faith backgrounds'.

Paul Barber, Catholic Education Service 15th December 2014

At St Gregory's we seek to *foster in our students 'the fullest spiritual, academic and personal development of our students' (Mission Statement)*, so they are fully prepared for life in British society and for their role as citizens, able to make the strongest possible contribution to the Common Good of all. As a Catholic school we seek to live out the values of Jesus Christ. We promote these values by our words and deeds and Catholic doctrine and practice therefore permeates every aspect of our school's activity. We provide a Catholic curriculum, which is broad and balanced, recognizing that every pupil is unique and created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Our curriculum is designed to enable every pupil to discern their vocation and to be well-equipped to follow it as active citizens in service to the world. Catholic Religious Education is the 'core of the curriculum' (Pope John Paul II) and the foundation of the entire educational process. We also provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and strong pastoral support. We incorporate democratic principles, value the rule of law, support individual liberty and foster a community in which different faiths and beliefs are respected.

The Gospel message revealed within lessons offer them faith informed values. They understand how these values can be lived in their daily lives.

All of the pupils interviewed or questioned informally were proud of the Catholicity of their school. They felt their faith or world views are respected. Their confident knowledge of Catholic social teaching enables them to understand how all faiths, religions' and secular groups can work together for the wellbeing of others.

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The examples that follow are an indication of some of the many ways we seek to embed British values at St. Gregory's Catholic High School and should be seen as an indication of our approach rather than an exhaustive list.

Democracy

At St. Gregory's Catholic High School, the principle of democracy is consistently reinforced, with the democratic process being employed for important decisions within the school community, for instance, elections for our School Council and annual SEAL Awards. The principle of democracy is explored in History and Religious Studies as well as in form time,

Collective Worship and PSD. 20% of of students are actively involved in student voice activities in which they can share their voice in matters such as departmental Learning and Teaching Reviews, anti-bullying (150 and increasing Anti-Bullying Ambassadors), dining room menu and our school environment to name but a few.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws, whether they are those that govern the class, our school or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout the school day, in class and during social times. Our students understand the values and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, that there are responsibilities and also consequences when laws are broken. Our students have many opportunities to debate the rule of law through our PSD programme, as well as aspects of our GCSE Religious Studies curriculum and membership of our Law Group. We educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an education that empowers. We encourage students to see themselves as unique individuals able to make a unique contribution to building the community we live in. All our students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights, responsibilities and personal freedoms and receive advice about how to exercise these safely, for example through exploration of e-safety in computing and their form time activities.

Mutual Respect

Respect is at the core of our school ethos and is modelled by students and staff alike. The school promotes respect for others through our SEAL agenda and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning environments. With 20% of our students involved in pupil voice initiatives, students at St. Gregory's Catholic High School are always able to voice their opinions and we are proud of a school environment where students are safe to disagree with each other and yet know they will be challenged if needed. Mutual respect is embraced throughout the curriculum and can be seen in the concept of 'fair play' in PE to our Paired Maths and Reading Groups which promote mutual respect and support between students across different year groups within the school.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

This is achieved through equipping students with the ability to understand their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity within our school community. We run trips abroad where possible (Poland, China, France) where our students gain valuable experience of other cultures and languages. Additionally, students are actively encouraged to share their faith and beliefs within the school. Our Religious Education curriculum provides a broad and balanced education on a range of faiths, religions and cultures.

At St. Gregory's we will actively challenge students, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including extremist views.

