

British Values Policy

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Statement of intent

Briarwood School understands the importance of supporting pupils to develop the skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in, and contribute positively to, life in modern Britain. We promote 'British Values' through our spiritual, moral, social and cultural education which permeates through the school's curriculum, particularly the 'Myself' curriculum and supports the development of the whole child. We recognise that such development is most successful when those values and attitudes are promoted by all the staff and provide a model of behaviour for our pupils. At Briarwood, the promotion of British Values is embedded within our SEND-specific curriculum, ensuring all pupils, regardless of communication, cognitive or physical needs, can access and contribute meaningfully.

This policy sets out the framework in which the school will ensure that it actively promotes the fundamental British values of:

- Democracy,
- The rule of law,
- Individual liberty,
- Mutual respect,
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

These values are specifically taught throughout the curriculum; however, the school recognises the importance of integrating the teaching of these values throughout all aspects of pupils' educational life, including through:

- Assemblies.
- Extra-curricular activities.
- Wider opportunities, e.g. educational visits and work experience.
- Literature available at the school.
- The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) understanding.

1 Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Ofsted (2024) 'Schools inspection handbook'
- DfE (2014) 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools'
- Prevent Duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, still statutory for schools, and reflected in KCSIE 2025)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour and Pastoral Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Policy and Public Duty Statement

- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Anti Racism Policy

2 Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the British values are upheld throughout the school.
- Holding executive leaders to account for their performance regarding British values.

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the requirement to uphold British values through the methods outlined in this policy.
- Ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to carry out these methods. Disciplining staff who do not uphold British values, in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Staff are responsible for:

- Modelling behaviour that respects and adheres to the fundamental British values.
- Ensuring that pupils feel as though their views count and supporting them to develop positive self-esteem.
- Implementing and enforcing this policy and other policies and procedures that reinforce the British values, e.g. the Behaviour and Pastoral Policy.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their lessons are inclusive of, and sensitive to, the fundamental British values.
- Ensuring that teaching methods are designed to bolster pupils' self-esteem and that all pupils are given the opportunity to speak and offer their views.
- Ensuring that lessons discuss, pull examples from and are respectful of a diverse array of cultures.

3 Aims and objectives

Through our policy and procedures, we aim to ensure that our pupils have:

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process.
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety.
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law.
- An acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

4 Democracy

Pupils will be taught, in an age and stage appropriate way, the advantages and disadvantages of democracy, as well as how democracy works in the UK.

Staff will ensure that pupils feel as though their views and opinions matter, and will be given opportunities to talk about their feelings, e.g. through pupil voice activities including their annual reviews, pastoral support, and the RSHE and PSHE curriculums.

The ability to understand and communicate are the most important areas of learning. Communication runs as a thread throughout our Curriculum as well as being an independent subject. We ensure that pupils are given a 'voice' to communicate. This 'voice' could be using words, objects, photographs, pictures, symbols, touch cues, eye pointing or body. At Briarwood many of the pupils have very limited or no verbal language. The communication curriculum, moving from intensive interaction through to signs, symbols, photographs, pictures, PEC's and incorporating, where appropriate for individual students, augmentative communication methods is used to great effect to support and enable students' receptive understanding and expressive communication.

Pupils will also have opportunities to have their views about the school and their education heard, including through the school council.

We try to develop pupil voice within the classroom, across and outside the school during every day through:

- making choices (e.g. during lessons, at snack and playtimes / lunchtimes)
- making decisions in concrete situations that are immediately and personally relevant to them i.e. following visual timetables
- music in all its wonderful forms and including Communication through music
- the use of microphones and switches
- the development of peer advocacy
- friends
- reflection on theirs and others work including daily opportunities to feedback to their families.

We empower our pupils by giving them opportunities to make choices about the things that they believe to be important. By valuing each 'voice' and by listening and responding to that voice we demonstrate that we support democracy and liberty.

Our 'School Council' ensures that all of our pupils are able to contribute towards the continuous improvement of the school community. The School Councils model supports the development of essential life skills such as confidence, self-esteem, negotiation and compromise; it opens out involvement to all pupils in the school and provides a clear structure for skills development and participation. The model links directly to SMSC/British Values, Prevent and the Ofsted guidance on social action. It also allows our school to track data on student involvement and the progress of the intervention.

5 The rule of law

The school has a high regard for the laws that govern and protect the school, the responsibilities that this involves, and the consequences when laws are broken. Pupils will be taught these values and the reasons behind laws that are essential for their wellbeing and safety.

Pupils will also be taught to understand the importance of their own behaviour, the impact that their behaviour has on others, and the consequences of their behaviour, through the implementation and enforcement of the school Behaviour and Pastoral Policy.

We involve pupils in setting codes of behaviour, helping pupils to make decisions and choices that are acceptable to the school community and society at large. Pupils are helped to learn to manage their behaviour and take responsibility for their actions. Staff are committed to providing a consistent and predictable environment within the school and beyond. We can help some pupils to understand the connection between actions and consequences. This type of environment enables pupils to feel safe and secure, this in turn, promotes the optimum conditions for learning to take place. At Briarwood School we have a Positive Behaviour approach which aims to create an environment which supports pupils and staff to understand what factors may influence specific behaviours, the function of these behaviours and the strategies that can be developed to support skill development.

6 Individual liberty

A safe and supportive environment will be fostered throughout the school, where pupils are actively encouraged to make choices.

Pupils are supported to understand personal freedoms and online safety at a level appropriate to their developmental stage, including the importance of respectful online interactions and recognising unsafe or extremist online content.

Pupils will be taught about their rights, personal freedoms and personal autonomy, and are encouraged and advised on how to exercise these safely, for instance through teaching on online safety, RSHE and PSHE.

Pupils are encouraged to become good and valued citizens. We do this by supporting each pupil to become as independent as possible. Through our Curriculum, pupils are consistently striving to become as independent as possible and our bespoke Assessment system allows for this.

We endeavour to demonstrate that everyone has rights; this includes the right to say 'Yes' or 'No' to ideas or activities. Some pupils will be able to take responsibility for particular roles and to understand that with certain rights comes a level of responsibility. Learning to do things independently is an important part of learning to understand yourself. Through the Myself sessions in the Briarwood Curriculum, pupils are given bespoke opportunities to learn to make choices, consider their feelings and learn to make appropriate responses.

We support others by participating in charitable events such as, Red Nose Day/Comic Relief and Children in Need. We believe that engendering a caring and helpful environment and to be independent can boost and nurture a healthy self-esteem. Pupils take part in enrichment activities and access their local community regularly. This supports pupils to access their local environment with many pupils taking part in activities which benefit the wider community.

7 Mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

The school will ensure that respect for all individuals, regardless of their protected characteristics and/or backgrounds, is promoted throughout the school. Pupils will be taught about the importance of diversity in British society, and will learn about different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds throughout the curriculum.

Staff members will ensure that they always treat everyone, with respect, and will ensure that pupils learn to treat each other and all members of staff with respect as well.

This is reinforced through the school's Behaviour and Pastoral Policy which will sanction disrespectful behaviour and reinforce positive and respectful behaviour.

The school acknowledges that tolerance is achieved through pupils' knowledge and understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and the opportunity for pupils to experience such diversity.

We promote each pupil's inclusion in activities, settings and locations that are appropriate to them individually to meet their needs. Within school, pupils work with a range of people and interactions with others are always positively promoted on a personalised basis for each individual. This may include working with students from other schools, coaches, theatre groups etc.

The curriculum is personalised and planned for pupils and may include transitioning within the range of resources and places on the site and going into the community to meet with a range of people in a variety of situations which include: sports events, community events and shared participation with other schools/colleges. We believe it is important to facilitate opportunities to be part of the community as the pupils, families and staff have much to offer in the development of community cohesion.

The school will encourage pupils of all faiths and religions to share their knowledge and experiences with their peers, as freely as they feel comfortable to, to enhance their learning.

We are part of a school and local community where each person is respected and valued equally without regard to ability, gender, faith, heritage or race. Culture, faith and religion are built into our Curriculum, not only through Religious Education, but through the value we place on reflection, community and life experiences.

Cultural appreciation and development forms part of our curriculum. We place great emphasis on providing encounters and participation in events and celebrations to broaden all pupils' experiences and awareness of others. We celebrate festivals from different cultures including Christmas and Eid.

Through our Curriculum we aim to develop an understanding of the beliefs of others, their traditions and values, and how they impact upon daily living. To develop a positive attitude towards those who are different/hold different beliefs to them and to develop a sense of belonging.

Our Assemblies help all pupils to find out about themselves and others linking their lives to the communities in which they belong. The themes cover areas such as: friendships, helping others and celebrations from a range of faiths and world events. At Briarwood we believe it is important for pupils to experience coming together as a whole school or class and to have the time and space to be

reflective and still. Pupils have the opportunity to celebrate important religious festivals related to a variety of different faiths, therefore acknowledging beliefs and values within and beyond the school. Also, share and foster the values the school seeks to live by and offer insights into religious and other beliefs.

Collective Worship at Briarwood encourages pupils to:

- Use all their senses
- Use their imaginations
- Reflect quietly
- Express their thoughts and feelings
- Respond to information and stories
- Participate in musical or dramatic items
- Present a positive image of unfamiliar cultures, religions and traditions

Pupils are encouraged to experience British Culture through our curriculum themes. For example, pupils regularly visit many local places during their My Community sessions.

As a school, we take part in sporting activities which helps to instil 'fair play' and engender a 'team spirit'. Although some of our pupils may find it difficult to articulate their feelings and concerns; staff are attuned to changes in demeanour and well-being that may indicate anxiety. If they are concerned about a pupil, our accepted practice links to the Safeguarding Policy which entrusts a duty of care to all staff to actively protect and promote the welfare of children. The staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that the pupils at Briarwood are happy, well cared for and enabled to learn the skills they need to live a fulfilling life as part of their community. We have an active Family Link team which supports this work.

8 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC)

Briarwood School has a strong commitment to the personal and social development of all pupils. The school vision and values, put together by all the staff, supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural characteristics in all pupils.

What is SMSC – Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development?

Spiritual development is when we:

Explore beliefs and experience; respect faiths, feelings and values, enjoy learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world; use imagination and creativity; reflect.

Moral development is when we:

Recognise right and wrong; respect the law; understand consequences; investigate moral and ethical issues; offer reasoned views.

Social development is when we:

Use a range of social skills; participate in the local community; appreciate diverse viewpoints; participate, volunteer and co-operate; resolve conflict; engage with the 'British values' of democracy, the rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance.

Cultural development is when we:

Appreciate cultural influences; appreciate the role of Britain's parliamentary system; participate in culture opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity. In our school pupil's SMSC development is seen for example in:

- Taking part in a range of activities regarding social skills
- Developing an awareness and respect for diversity
- Developing and appreciation of theatre
- Developing an understanding of right and wrong
- Developing communication skills to make choices about likes/
- Taking part in sporting opportunities
- Taking part in cultural opportunities
- Taking part in artistic opportunities

SMSC is embedded throughout the curriculum at Briarwood. This integrated approach ensures that aspects of SMSC is considered in all subject areas. The senior leadership team audits SMSC and Governors monitor it across school.

Beyond the Curriculum

We are also committed as a school to developing SMSC beyond the curriculum. This is done through:

- Arts, Music and Cultural Specialists visits to school over the year
- The promotion of the Arts through the Curriculum
- Assemblies give pupils an opportunity to explore aspects of SMSC

9 Challenging views that go against British values

The school openly challenges opinions and behaviour, demonstrated by both staff and pupils, that goes against British values.

The school does not tolerate discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour.

Referrals regarding pupils that may be at risk of radicalisation will be made in accordance with the school's Prevent Duty and Safeguarding & Child Protection policy.

10 Prevent Duty

Briarwood School is committed to fulfilling its statutory Prevent Duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. We recognise that pupils with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to exploitation or radicalisation due to communication differences, social isolation, and challenges in understanding the intentions of others.

Staff receive training to recognise early signs of radicalisation within the context of SEND, such as changes in behaviour, withdrawal from activities, or expressing concerning views, including online. We ensure that Prevent risk assessments and interventions are adapted to meet the communication and comprehension needs of our pupils, using approaches appropriate to their cognitive and communication profiles.

Where concerns are identified, staff follow the procedures outlined in our Safeguarding and Prevent procedures, ensuring that safeguarding and Prevent work is integrated and proportionate to the pupil's individual needs.

11 Staff training

All staff are made aware of their responsibilities in upholding and promoting British Values as part of their induction, which includes the Teaching and Learning module and safeguarding induction.

British Values, including the Prevent Duty, are revisited annually through whole-school safeguarding and child protection training for all staff. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and Deputy DSLs (DDSLs) receive enhanced safeguarding and child protection training at least every two years, in accordance with statutory guidance, ensuring their knowledge remains current and effective. In addition, safeguarding updates and “snippets” in staff bulletins throughout the year reinforce the understanding of British Values and how these align with our safeguarding responsibilities.

Staff are supported to adapt the teaching and promotion of British Values to meet the needs of all learners, including non-verbal pupils, those with sensory processing needs, and pupils with complex learning difficulties, ensuring every pupil has the opportunity to engage meaningfully with these values in a way appropriate to their developmental and communication profile.

Staff are offered additional training opportunities if needed to strengthen their knowledge and confidence in promoting British Values within our SEND setting.