

Fundamental British values and the prevent strategy

Information for parents.

Dear parents and carers,

There has been a great deal of coverage in the press recently about British values and the prevent strategy.

What are 'fundamental British values'?

Schools are required to provide for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of their pupils. As part of this requirement, we are expected to actively promote fundamental British values.

The government defines these as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

What does this mean for my child?

Our efforts to promote fundamental British values are designed to prepare children for life in modern Britain. Ultimately, we aim to help pupils understand:

- The importance of combatting discrimination.
- How we can influence decision-making by taking part in democratic processes like voting and petitioning.
- Our freedom under British law to choose different faiths and beliefs.
- That the law is there to keep us safe.

What does this look like in school?

The values are reflected throughout our school, including in our ethos, policies and assemblies. Children also engage with the values through the curriculum, in ways that are suitable for their age and context. For example, in some subjects there are opportunities to think about traditions from different cultures and religions.

Extra curricular activities such as games teach children about the importance of rules. Pupil votes, questionnaires and councils are other ways that children can have their voices heard and learn about democracy.

Our duty to actively promote fundamental British values means that we always present political views to children in a balanced way. We are also responsible for challenging prejudiced or extreme opinions and behaviour.

As part of this responsibility, we have put measures in place to protect children from exposure to extremist views.

Frequently asked questions?

Will my child still be able to express his/her faith at school?

Absolutely. One of these values is respect and tolerance of people with different faiths and we teach our children that British law protects their freedom to hold their own beliefs. Any prejudice or discrimination towards pupils on the basis of their faith goes against the fundamental British values and will not be tolerated by the school.

How will this affect my child's lessons?

The curriculum provides lots of opportunities to look at British and global values. Your child will already have some experience of this in lessons such as religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE). In each subject, our teachers will look out for these opportunities and encourage children to think about how the values link into the topics they are studying.

Will there be major changes to the school's ethos?

Our School's ethos already includes many aspects of the government's British values. For example, we expect our children to follow the school rules and show kindness to one another. Promoting British values will reinforce, not change, our current ethos.



What is the Prevent strategy?

Prevent is a government strategy designed to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting extremist causes.

The Prevent strategy covers all types of terrorism and extremism, including the extreme right wing, violent Islamist groups and other causes.

How does the Prevent strategy apply to schools?

From July 2015 all schools (as well as organisations) have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism.

This means we have a responsibility to protect children from extremist and violent views the same way we protect them from drugs and gang violence.

Importantly, we can provide a safe place for pupils to discuss these issues so they better understand how to protect themselves.

What does this look like in school?

Many of the things we already do in school help children become positive, happy members of society also contribute to the Prevent strategy.

These include:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity.
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments.
- Developing critical thinking skills and a strong, positive self-identity.
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, as well as British values such as democracy.

We will also protect children from the risk of radicalisation, for example by using filters on the internet material, or by vetting visitors who come into school to work with pupils.

Different schools will carry out Prevent duty in different ways, depending on the age of the children and the needs of the community.

Frequently asked questions?

How does prevent relate to British Values?

Schools have been required to promote British values since 2014, and this will continue to be part of our response to the Prevent strategy.

Isn't my child too young to learn about extremism?

The Prevent strategy is not just about discussing extremism itself, which may not be appropriate for younger children. It is also about teaching children values such as tolerance and mutual respect.

The school will make sure any discussions are a suitable for the age and maturity of the children involved.

Is extremism really a risk in our area?

Extremism can take many forms, including political, religious and misogynistic extremism. Some of these may be a bigger threat in our area than others.

We will give children the skills to protect them from any extremist views they encounter, now or later in their lives.

Frequently asked questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about Fundamental British Values or the Prevent strategy and what it means for your child, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

You may also find the following sources useful:

Promoting Fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools, DfE

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

Guidance on promoting British values in schools published

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published>

Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, HM Government

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance__England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf

Frequently asked questions, Prevent For Schools

http://www.preventforschools.org/?category_id=38

What is prevent? Let's Talk About It

<http://www.ltai.info/what-is-prevent/>