

British Values and Tackling Radicalisation

The Department of Education have 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 by the Prime Minister. At Middleham School, these values are reinforced regularly and in the following ways:

Democracy

Children are actively encouraged to have a voice and share their views and opinions regularly. Our active **school council** is one such example. The school council representatives meet regularly to discuss whole school issues and represent the views of their class. This sets ground rules for classroom conduct and establishes the standards of behaviour children can expect from each other over the year ahead. All children also complete an annual questionnaire which provides them with the opportunity to share their views of their time in school and suggest ways in which the school could be improved further. Governors and staff also talk regularly to children to establish their views as a way of ensuring that school self-evaluation is robust and accurate, and therefore effective in moving the school forward.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout the school day, as well as when dealing with misconduct and through school assemblies. Children are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from authorities such as the Police help reinforce this message. In RE lessons, the difference between religious law and the law of the country are discussed.

Individual Liberty

Within school, children are actively encouraged to make decisions and choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school, we educate and provide boundaries for young children to take risks and make choices safely. Children are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons. Whether it be through choice of learning challenge, how they record their learning, participation in one of our extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, children are given the freedom to make choices and decisions.

Mutual Respect

Mutual respect is at the heart of our values. Children learn that their behaviour has an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect.

Tolerance of Those of Different Faiths and Beliefs

Middleham is situated in an area which is not very culturally diverse, therefore it is important we explore diversity with the children, so they are more than just tolerate people who are different to themselves, but are respectful. Assemblies are regularly planned to address this issue either directly or through the inclusion of stories and celebrations from a variety of beliefs, countries, faiths and cultures beyond our children's experiences. Our RE and PSHE teaching reinforces this.

We will actively challenge children, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including those expressing extremist and radical views.

PREVENTING RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

The Governing Body of Middleham Primary School has a **zero tolerance** approach to extremist behaviour for all school community members. We rely on our strong values and ethos to steer our work and ensure the pastoral care of our children protects them from exposure to negative influences. Middleham School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its children. As a school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability. All staff are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including **democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.**

- Children are encouraged to adopt an attitude of valuing each other as individuals which complements the key "British Values" of tolerance, respect, understanding, compassion and harmonious living.
- Children are helped to understand the importance of democracy and freedom of speech, through the PHSCE curriculum, assemblies and through the elected School Council members
- Children are taught how to keep themselves safe, in school and when using the internet.
- Children participate in local community events so that they appreciate and value their neighbours and friends who may not share their background.
- Children's wellbeing, confidence and resilience are promoted through our planned curriculum and extra-curricular learning opportunities.
- Children are supported in making good choices from a very young age, so they understand the impact and consequences of their actions on others.

THE ROLE OF THE CURRICULUM

Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Children are encouraged to express themselves through discussions, debates and consultations. The RE (Religious Education), PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education), Citizenship and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) provision is embedded across the curriculum, and underpins the ethos of our school. Children learn about major faiths and visit places of worship wherever possible. They are also taught about how to stay safe when using the internet.

Although serious incidents involving radicalisation have not occurred at Middleham to date, it is important for us to be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about the issues which affect the region in which we teach. Staff are reminded to suspend any professional disbelief that instances of radicalisation 'could not happen here' and to refer any concerns through the Child Protection/ Safeguarding Lead Teachers.

From the DfE "Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools" (Nov 2014)

Schools should 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. This can help schools to demonstrate how they are meeting the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002, in their provision of SMSC.

Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values. Attempts to promote systems that undermine fundamental British values would be completely at odds with schools' duty to provide SMSC. The Teachers' Standards expect teachers to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school. This includes not undermining fundamental British values.

Through their provision of SMSC, schools should:

- enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;

- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people; and
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

The list below describes the understanding and knowledge expected of pupils as a result of schools promoting fundamental British values.

- 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 there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence;

- an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- an acceptance that other 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; and
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.