

Promoting British Values in Beamish and Pelton Federation of Schools

‘Keeping our children safe and ensuring schools prepare them for life in modern Britain could not be more important. The vast majority of schools already promote British values. This is about making sure we have the tools we need to intervene if children are being let down’.

Department for Education (2014)

In accordance with Dfe guidance (November 2014) and section 78 of the Education Act (2002) , our Federation of schools 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.

Actively promoting the values means we challenge opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values. At Beamish and Pelton Federation of Schools, values of tolerance and respect permeate all areas of school life. This engenders a climate within which pupils feel safe and secure and facilitates the fulfilment of potential.

British Values are actively promoted in the following ways:

Democracy

- Respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process

Democracy is strong within the Federation. Children have the opportunity to have their voices heard through a democratically elected school council. The council meet regularly in both schools and participate in a range of decision making activities. In addition annual questionnaires give pupils an opportunity to put forward their views. A summary of these are displayed, and actions identified.

The Federation feels it is important that children are able to express their views, and that they can argue and defend their point of view.

At Beamish our local MP has visited and explained his role, both regionally and nationally. Previously Year 6 children have visited Parliament in London for a personal tour, at the invitation of our local councillor. In Pelton children were recently invited to design a flag which represents the area, for our local MP.

The rule of law

- Respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied
- Support for equality of opportunity for all

The importance of Laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout regular school days. 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.

At the centre of all we do is a restorative approach to resolve conflicts, and promote positive behaviour. Restorative approach provides an underpinning ethos and philosophy for making, maintaining and repairing relationships and for fostering a sense of social responsibility and shared accountability.

Both schools work with the Youth Offending Team to help understand that living under the rule of law protects individual. In addition we have strong links with local community police teams.

Individual liberty

- Support and respect for the liberties of all within the law

At our Federation of schools, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. We educate and provide boundaries for pupils to make informed choices, through a safe environment and an empowering education. Children are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our strong anti – bullying culture and creative PSHE lessons.

Our restorative approach also encompasses liberty, by encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour, while appreciating their rights.

Respect and tolerance

- Respect for, and tolerance of, different faiths religious beliefs

Mutual respect is at the heart of our values. Children learn that their behaviours have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community are expected to treat each other with respect. Prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour is always challenged.

Pupils acquire an understanding, and promotion, of the cultures of others by visits into school of a range of positive role models from different faiths, ethnicity and gender. Religious Education lessons and PSHE lessons reinforce messages of tolerance and respect for others.

We actively promote diversity through our celebrations of different faiths and cultures. Both schools have links with local churches and visit them as part of curriculum work, as well as during Christian festivals. The Federation also place great importance on visits to a range of places of worship from other faiths.