

# UNDERSTANDING BRITISH VALUES

Information presentation for parents/carers and pupils

## The four British values

### Fundamental British values

There are four important values that summarise what it means to be a citizen of Great Britain today. Every person in Britain should have respect for the values and live by them.

The four values are:



## Important words

**Liberty:** The overall freedom of an individual or nation.

**Autonomy:** The ability to act on your own, and based on what you believe in and what you think is important in life.

**Tolerance:** The acceptance and understanding of other people's behaviour and beliefs even if you do not agree with them.

**Gender identity:** A person's internal sense of their own gender. This could be male, female, or something else.

**Diversity:** The difference between people and objects in any given situation.

**Stereotype:** The ways that we expect people to behave in society, e.g. expecting all boys to like blue and all girls to like pink.

## Democracy

Britain is a democratic nation – but what does this mean?

To be in a democracy means that the people who live in a country vote on the way it is run. It promotes freedom and equality and everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities.

People aged 18 and over can vote for matters, e.g. for the next Prime Minister. This means that they get the opportunity to listen to different points of view, policies or practices and then vote for the one they want the most.

This is important because it gives people the chance to have their say on how they live their life. It gives power to the people to make important changes.

Being in a democracy is not restricted to how the country is run. Schools can also run in a democratic way.

We mirror the democratic process by getting you, the pupils, to vote on things that are important to you and your education so you have an influence on the decisions made in school. We do this because we think it is essential that you enjoy your education; we respect your opinions and want you to have fun at school.

Here are a few things you have changed already at school:

- [School dinners](#)
- [School council](#)
- [New play equipment](#)

## The rule of law

Britain has a set of laws that are in place to keep its people safe and free from harm. If you break a law you could go to prison for a long time. Laws are there to protect us, ensuring we are able to live happy lives in a secure environment.

Laws are essential for our wellbeing and this is why we have organisations such as the army and the police to keep us safe and protect us and our borders from danger.

If someone breaks the law, they will be arrested and put on trial by a court of law. This is where a Judge and Jury will decide on whether the person is innocent or guilty, and how they will be punished if they are guilty.

Everyone in Britain is able to have a fair trial – this means that people will not be disciplined for unjustified reasons. When someone is disciplined for unjust reasons this is known as **discrimination**.

## Discrimination

Discrimination means treating people less favourably or differently because of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender (or gender reassignment)
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

It is against the law to treat people differently because of any of the above and you can be disciplined if you do so.

## Individual liberty

Just as it is ok for other people to be different, it is also ok for you to be different!

British law protects individual's liberty – citizens of the UK can live how they choose within the limits of the law. You can practise any faith you choose, live wherever you want and you can have any job you put your mind to.

We also like encouraging differences in school. We like learning about you and what makes you different.



You make a lot of choices every day that can influence how you live your life!

Raise your hands if you think you have a choice over the following things:

Friendships ✓

Relationships ✓

Your safety ✓

Playtime games ✓

After-school clubs ✓

Lunch menu ✓

What you learn ✓

You should always be respectful of other people's choices and, in turn, people should show you the same respect for the choices you make.

As long as you are not causing harm to yourself or other people through the choices you make, then you should embrace and celebrate them.

If you want to make any big changes in your life or you feel like you enjoy things that are different to your friends, you can always talk to a teacher or member of staff about them. **We will always be there to support your choices and help you where possible.**

It is important to remember that it is good to be different and we should celebrate everyone's differences as well as our similarities.

Knowing different people can teach us things we didn't know about ourselves and the world. It is exciting to learn new things and we will understand people better if we try and get to know them.

Sally is 15 years old and was born in Manchester

Sally is a girl



Sally goes to a Christian church every Sunday

Sally likes swimming

Sally has a lot of friends

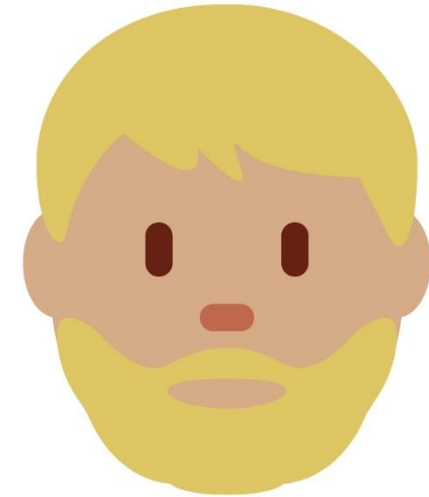
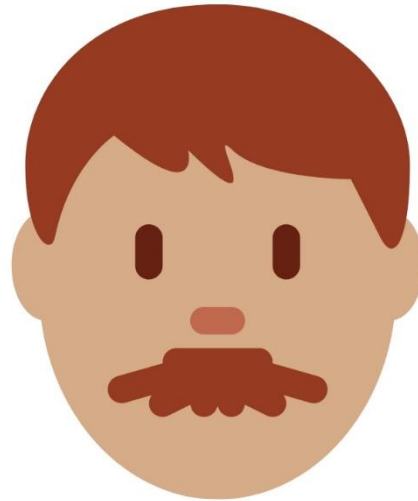
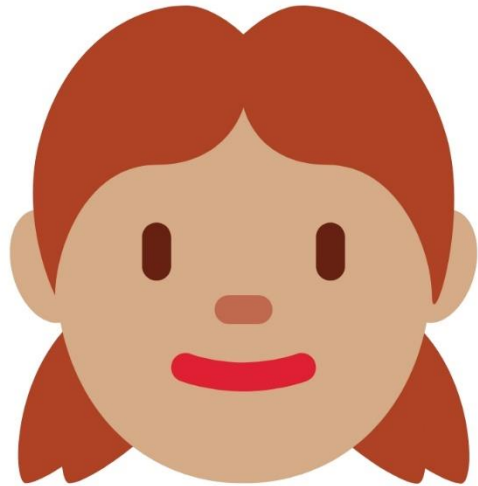
Sally is disabled from the waist down

Sally's favourite meal is spaghetti carbonara

**Meet Sally**

Here are Sally's Dads

Here is Sally's mum



Sally is a very happy girl who loves her parents and they love her very much!

Sadly, Sally gets bullied at school – people laugh at her for having three parents.

Sally

Families are all different and no one should be bullied because of this.

You don't need one mum and one dad to make a family. A family can be made up of a single parent and a child, or parents who adopted or fostered their child or even a child being raised by relations such as grandparents. What truly matters is that whoever proves you care loves you and keeps you safe and free from harm.

**Remember:** nobody should be bullied for being who they are or their families. We should learn about our friends and **respect their differences**. It is ok to **ask questions** about their differences if you don't understand, but **never be rude** or nasty towards them.

Our school has a zero-tolerance attitude towards bullying. This means that if you ever bully someone else you will be disciplined – this could be through a warning, detention or exclusion.

## Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying is when someone is nasty to a person based on who they fall in love with, i.e. sexual orientation.

We do not accept any form of bullying at our school and anyone who is found to have been bullying their peer will be disciplined.

Words and phrases we do **not** want to hear:

- 'That's so gay' or 'you're so gay'
- 'Don't be such a girl' or 'you kick like a girl'
- Referring to someone as a 'it' or 'he-she'

## Mutual respect and tolerance

As we have seen with individual liberty, we have the right to choose the way we live – this includes lifestyle choices and faiths. This value ensures people have a good attitude towards others, and recognise and respects the individual liberty of others. Even if you don't agree with what someone believes, you should respect their choices to try and understand why they believe what they do.

### **Cultural differences**

Britain is multicultural – this means that it has a lot of people living in it who come from different backgrounds and live lives that may be different to how your family lives theirs. There is no one right way to live and these differences should be celebrated. Remember: we learn and grow together and it is important not to judge people before you get to know them.

This can be achieved by:

- Learning some basic greetings in a different language
- Learning about different cultural festivals
- Trying different cuisine



**Hello**  
English

**Salut**  
French

**Hej**  
Danish

**Oi**  
Portuguese

**Hallo**  
German

**Ciao**  
Italian

**Hola**  
Spanish

**Hallá**  
Swedish



## Religion

There are many different communities within the UK that practise different faiths and religions e.g. Christianity, Catholicism, Judaism and Islam to name a few. At school we practise Christianity. This means we practice the core values of Christians throughout the school day e.g. in assemblies.

It is important we learn about different faiths so that we can understand them and the values they promote. Being culturally aware helps you expand your knowledge of other people and their values. We have to be tolerant of people even if they do not believe in the same things as ourselves, whether that is religion, faith or lifestyle choices.

At school, we teach about different cultures and religions through PSHE lessons and RSE. If you feel like you don't understand something or you want to learn more, you can always discuss these topics with your teacher.

## Summary

- There are four fundamental British values: **democracy, liberty, rule of law and mutual tolerance and respect**
- It is important to be accepting of other people even if they don't share our values and beliefs – this is otherwise known as tolerance.
- There are nine protected characteristics that are protected by law
- We live in a democracy – this means that we are governed by leaders who have been selected by the people. This is something we also practice in school.
- Being different is something to be celebrated and we should always be trying to learn different things about ourselves and others.
- It is ok to ask questions if you don't understand anything to do with the British values.