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| CVSE Promoting British Values and Furthering Tolerance Between Different Cultural Traditions Policy | |
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**Purpose of the Policy.**

The Department for Education published in November 2014 guidance on promoting British values and in schools and furthering tolerance between different cultural traditions to ensure young people leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. The guidance was aimed at helping both independent and state-maintained schools understand their responsibilities in this area. All have a duty to ‘actively 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 (values that were first set out by the government in the ‘Prevent’ strategy in 2011).

**Examples of the understanding and knowledge pupils are expected to learn include:**

* an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
* 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 behavior
* an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination

**Examples of actions schools can take to promote British values are to:**

* include in suitable parts of the curriculum - as appropriate for the age of pupils - material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain, in contrast to other forms of government in other countries
* ensure all pupils within the school have a voice that is listened to, and demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes such as a school council whose members are voted for by the pupils
* use opportunities such as general or local elections to hold mock elections to promote fundamental British values and provide pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view
* an interesting area for development would be to consider the role of extra-curricular activity, including any run directly by pupils, in promoting fundamental British values

**Examples of actions schools can take to further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions are to:**

* Encouraging pupils to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance.
* looking at a broad spectrum of factors that are common to a diverse range of communities, such as custom, traditions, dress, food, and so on
* examining different cultures from both a historical and a contemporary perspective
* examining the difference between culture and faith, while studying how the two can be interlinked, and influence each other
* encouraging pupils to regard all faiths, races and cultures with respect, preparing pupils to interact easily with people of different cultures and faiths.

Calder Valley Steiner School also takes note of advice from its local Council, namely Calderdale Council, in this area. Calderdale Council has published a number of guidance papers, including ‘Advice & Guidance Toolkit Designed to Assist in Promoting British Values in Schools’, and ‘Inspection of Schools when promoting British values’.

**British Values and furthering tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions as part of the Steiner-Waldorf curriculum**

Department for Education advice (2014) states that:

Aspects of SMSC can be developed through virtually all parts of the curriculum and infused within the day to day operation of a school, e.g. in its behaviors and ethos, although some subjects and activities are likely to be more relevant than others. Expectations in all areas must be adjusted for the age and ability of pupils, including those with special needs.

This advice is in tune with the founding principles of Steiner Waldorf education going back to 1919, that the development of the human being as a socially responsible human being should permeate all aspects of the curriculum. Indeed, the notion of individual freedom and respect and tolerance of others, and what Rudolf Steiner termed **ethical individualism** in his fundamental philosophical work *The* *Philosophy of Freedom*, goes back further in the development of Steiner’s philosophy, while underpinning Steiner-Waldorf education. Though not taught directly in the school setting, it is an active concept that freely underpins the work of the teacher since it embodies our responsibility to the world in its totality. Its natural consequence it also a genuinely liberating notion of freedom, such that, ‘To *live* in love towards our actions, and to *let live* in the understanding of the other person’s will, is the fundamental maxim of free human beings.’ (Chapter 9.) The Steiner Waldorf Curriculum allows for a broad and flexible age-appropriate approach, where particular subject areas may be integrated into a specific Main Lesson block, giving added depth, meaning and context to the subject matter being taught at any one time. The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural programme (SMSC) at the school seeks to develop notions of freedom, understanding and tolerance throughout the school in an age-appropriate way. The Steiner Waldorf Curriculum and teaching methods also makes provision for pupils to gain a knowledge and understanding of public institutions and services in Britain. Calder Valley Steiner School seeks to do this in the following ways and situations.

**How does Calder Valley Steiner School promote British values and further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions?**

At Calder Valley Steiner School we support the children in our care to grow naturally into confident, well-balanced, self-disciplined and considerate individuals who are aware of their responsibilities within a community. This includes promoting British values and furthering tolerance in a transparent and balanced way, while preparing students to become valued members of society when they reach adulthood. In particular, the school recognizes the importance in modern Britain for children to understand, respect and appreciate the richness and diversity of other religions and cultures. The school does this by:

* exploring the rich possibilities of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum (e.g. the History and Geography main lesson program) in relation to contemporary multi-cultural and multi-racial Britain as a modern democracy;
* regularly organising fund-raising events which support local, national and international charities;
* having a broad and balanced curriculum that provides a wide range of subjects which prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in Modern Britain;
* actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance;
* extending the experience of the children beyond the classroom with a wide range of visits and events;
* promoting tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths [or none], cultures and lifestyles through effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including encouraging pupils through school visits to settings culturally different from the school (e.g. visits to Mosques, Synagogues, Sikh or Hindu Temples and so on);
* encouraging extracurricular activity and volunteering in their local community;
* building a sense of pride in our community which should inform all our actions;
* Building positive relationships with others in our wider community while inspiring students to act in a fair and just manner, celebrating their achievements and taking responsibility for their actions where it is needed.

**The school also endeavours to ensure that students:**

* are reflective about their own beliefs and perspectives on life, and the extent to which they are the same as/different to others in terms of faith, feelings and values;
* show an interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, and appreciate the viewpoints of others;
* have a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about the world around them and participate actively in artistic, social or cultural activities;
* recognize the difference between right and wrong, understand that actions have consequences, and apply this in their own lives by respecting the Law;
* cooperate well, celebrate diversity and resolve conflicts effectively;
* engage positively with life in a democracy;
* Understand and appreciate the history, heritage and wide ranging cultural influences that underpin our individual and shared experience of life in modern Britain.

**Practical aspects of the curriculum in which British values are promoted, cross-cultural awareness is developed, and knowledge of public services and institutions is fostered:**

**Walks and local environment:**

* During the children’s walks, and as an extension to knowledge of their local environment, the teacher will bring to the children’s attention objects and events representative of public services and institutions. These might include the following: maintenance of roads, bridleways, footpaths, canals and railway lines (representing means of transport and communication); post boxes (representing the postal service); telegraph poles and transmitters (telecommunications); pylons (electricity services and National Grid); refuse lorries (refuse collection and disposal and Local Council services generally); ambulance or police car (emergency services generally); reservoirs and sewerage works (water supply and treatment). Always beginning with the observation of the object or event within their own local context, the children may be led to a knowledge of its wider significance, and of those people who work to provide it. This will always be done in a sensitive and age-appropriate way.
* Children are aware of, and help with local flood alleviation work, for example sweeping leaves and clearing storm drains, helping with local green dam (building) projects, and clearing invasive plants (e.g. Himalayan Balsam).
* The school also takes responsibility for maintaining the plants in a local public children’s playground.

**Cultural Awareness in Classes 1 & 2:**

* The study of Fairy tales from across the world in Class 1 (continuing into Class 2) provides a basis for understanding cultural diversity in the higher classes. The study of saints and holy figures from different religions provides the basis for understanding different faiths. This can also be complemented by visits to churches/temples. Animal Stories from across the globe also demonstrate how diverse cultures can approach the same story genre in a different ways.

**Cultural Awareness in Classes 3 & 4:**

* Exploration of pre-history begins in Class 3 with the study of Creation stories (including the Old Testament, and associated Jewish festivals, as well as other traditions). This opens the pupils to the notion that many cultures have their own creation stories and myths, and yet there is enormous diversity amongst them. Class 4 includes study of Norse Myths and Viking culture that gives on opportunity to look at the geography and culture of Scandinavia.

**Building and Farming:**

* Building and Farming are two of the key main lessons in Class 3. Both provide opportunities to explore fundamental human activities, and how they vary across different countries, cultures and climates.

**Geography:**

* From Class 4, geography becomes a more distinct subject, beginning with the Local Geography main lesson. In Class 5 this becomes wider, to include National Geography. Both these main lessons give very real and age-appropriate opportunities to cover many of the issues around public institutions and services, as well as the rule of law. For more detail of these main lessons, see the general curriculum document.

**History:**

* The History content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum, which is taught in Main Lesson blocks of three to four weeks throughout the school, gives a very good opportunity to explore the range of different faiths and cultures that have arisen across the world from pre-historical time’s right through to the present.
* Class 5 History begins with stories from Ancient Indian, the life of Buddha, and may explore the ancient epic of *Gilgamesh*. This gives opportunity study the culture that has evolved around Hinduism and Buddhism, and the geography of India and modern Iraq and Iran. Egyptian history and culture is also studied before going on to study the history and culture of Ancient Greece. Study of Greek culture gives opportunities to look at the Greek notion of democracy (possibilities to contrast this with the Greek attitude towards slavery); and the origins of the Olympic Games. *All these historical-cultural studies give the pupils opportunities reflect on how the values and practices of their own culture vary from, or have evolved from past cultures.*
* Class 6 History main lesson looks at Roman history and culture, leading to the decline of the Roman Empire. This, for example, gives the opportunity to examine the notions of citizenship, the rule of law, and the practice of debating and argument or idea, and how these concepts are still relevant in modern Britain. Class 6 History also includes how different cultures and religions have arisen and spread across Europe and Asia (e.g. the birth of Mohammed/Islam). This also gives the opportunity to study the geography of the Middle East, examine how different cultures and religions have coexisted alongside one another in the past). Class 6 provides a context for further school trips, such as to sites of Roman Britain (York, Hadrian’s Wall), as well as to places of religious worship (e.g. Mosque). As in previous classes, pupils will benefit from experiencing music, food and festivals relevant to the cultures they have studied, both through school trips, and through speakers from different faiths visiting the school.
* Class 7, with its emphasis on the Renaissance, civil liberties and individual creativity provides a historical basis for many aspects of society that exist today. Class 7 also explores the rise of certain technologies in the Middle Ages (that are then precursors to the institutions that exist today, e.g. ship building, weaponry, water and wind power, printing and so on).
* This leads to Class 8 history in which the Industrial Revolution is the central focus. This gives opportunities to study the rise of some of the most important public institutions and services in England (e.g. the rise of the railways, clean water and sewerage, advances in public health and medicine, roads and other infrastructure, the postal service, telecommunications and so on).

**National Events**

* The main lesson format, which is a central feature of all Steiner Schools, gives ample opportunity for national events and a knowledge of public institutions to be brought into a main lesson subject block as and when appropriate. Notions of right and wrong and the importance of the rule of law may be introduced where the context allows or is appropriate. The difference between civil law and criminal law may also be introduced. National events might include: Elections or Sporting Events (which could be integrated into a numeracy block); weddings or deaths of national (or global) figures; conflict events; or natural or man-made disasters plus general current affairs as part of main lesson. This will be done on a case by case basis in an age-appropriate way. The two Geography Main lessons in Classes 4 and 5 are particularly suited to this.

**Elections**

* Whenever there is an election, in particular when the neighboring church is used as a polling station, teachers may make the children aware of what an election is, and what it means to vote. This might also be integrated into the Main Lesson, with a range of options available to the teacher, such as a historical approach (connecting, say, the birth of Democracy with ancient Greece); or a numerical approach (integrating it into a numeracy main lesson). Different forms of election may also be discussed: e.g. the difference between regional or local; national; or European. The notion of what a referendum is may also be introduced.

**Guest speakers**

* Invited speakers may include representatives of the medical/caring professions; representatives of the emergency services, such as police or fire officers; as well as representatives of different faiths. Classes receive a fire safety talk from a Fire Officer in Class 4 or 5.

**Festivals**

* Festivals such as the Chinese New Year or Diwali give opportunities to build cultural awareness through sharing different foods, music, dance and visits and outings (e.g. Chinese New Year in Manchester). Children are also taught about Spanish festivals, foods and customs in the Spanish lessons.

**Subject lessons.** An awareness of wider public issues and services (as well as traditions) may also be brought into subject lessons. Different approaches may include:

* **Handwork**. The children will always be made aware of the origin and processes behind the materials they use (such as wool for knitting, and an awareness of sheep/hill farming). Wherever possible, local materials are sourced so that the children are aware of the full production cycle of the materials they are using, and the wider services used.
* **Gardening**. Through gardening, the children will become aware of the wider significance of food production, sustainability, the significance of locally grown foods, food security, and a knowledge of what food can be grown in the United Kingdom, and what is imported. This may also be covered in the Farming Main Lesson in Class 3.
* **Music**. Through music, and in particular singing and the children’s direct experience of English folk song, their knowledge and awareness of English cultural traditions and practices (such as songs connected with farming, the sea and fishing, village life, work songs generally, songs commemorating national events and so on) will be deepened. Also, songs from other cultures: African, Hebrew etc.
* **Religion**. Steiner Waldorf educator’s worldwide work with principles and an educational philosophy that recognizes key qualities of reverence towards the spiritual, respect for human beings and responsibility towards the natural world. These qualities are present both within the kindergarten and the first years of more formal education within the school. The Religion Lesson, as a subject lesson in its own right, begins only in Class 6 where the focus is often on the importance of moral values, perseverance in the face of adversity, and the biographies of specific individuals. This may have reference to the notion of individual liberty and the contextual role played by national values. Thus, both religious education and the more general religious aspect of school life can support the religious and cultural forms children derive from their families and communities (whether Christian or other), while providing them with the means to make individual, mature choices as they grow towards adulthood.

**Library Services.** Teachers, in their teaching, will also make use of library books, and make use of library services. In doing so, they will also make the children aware of library services. Taking children to visit a local library may also be considered.