

Promoting British Values at Ponteland Community Middle School

PCMS is committed to serving its community. It recognises the multi-cultural, multi faith and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom. It also understands the vital role it has in ensuring that groups or individuals within the school are not subjected to intimidation or radicalisation by those wishing to unduly, or illegally, influence them.

It follows equal opportunities guidance which guarantees that there will be no discrimination against any individual or group, regardless of faith, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, political or financial status. We are dedicated to preparing students for their adult life beyond the formal curriculum and ensuring that it promotes and reinforces British values to all its students.

The Government emphasises that schools are required to ensure that key 'British Values' are taught in all UK schools. The government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy.

The five British Values are:

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

The academy uses strategies within the National curriculum and beyond to secure such outcomes for students. The examples that follow show some of the many ways we seek to embed British values.

Democracy

The principle of democracy is consistently being reinforced, with democracy processes being used for important decisions within the school community, for instance, selections for Head Boy and Girl and Prefects positions, elections for Form class and Sports representatives; and Sport ambassadors. The principle of democracy is also explored in the History, Citizenship and Religious Studies curriculum as well as in form time and assemblies.

The rule of law

The importance of laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced at PCMS. Students are taught the rules and expectations of the school which are highlighted by the student code of conduct and student expectations. Students are taught the value and the reasons behind laws that govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from guests and agencies reinforce this message.

Individual liberty

At PCMS, students are actively encouraged to make independent choices, with the knowledge that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. Staff educate and provide boundaries for students to make informed choices, through a safe environment and an empowering education.

Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised on how to exercise these safely, for example through e-safety and PSHE work.

We have a robust anti-bullying culture and a comprehensive Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Mutual Respect

Respect is a strong part of our school and is part of our mission statement from John 10:10 'that they shall have life and in its abundance'. Children learn that their behaviours have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect and this is reiterated through our teaching and learning environments.

Mutual respect is embraced throughout the curriculum by providing the opportunity for students to express their views in a safe environment knowing that the thoughts and answers of all are respected'.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

This is achieved through reminding and guiding children that their place in a culturally diverse society gives us the opportunities to experience such diversity within the school community. We benefit from a number of international visitors, including pupils arriving from other countries and cultures. Additionally, children are actively encouraged to share their faith and beliefs within the school and celebrate festivities throughout the calendar year. The Religious Education curriculum provides a broad and balanced education on a range of faiths, religions and cultures.

PCMS children, through foundation subjects and regular assemblies recognise their social, moral, spiritual and cultural respect for all contributes to a greater community interaction and consolidation. Since 2005 we have worked with Wanga Primary School in Kenya and have taught children about life in other countries and develop them as global citizens.

Through this we help our children develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence; distinguish right from wrong and to respect English law; encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and contribute positively to society; enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of, and respect for, English public institutions and services and to appreciate and respect their own and other cultures.

We ensure our pupils leave with the strongest foundation of values upon which to build a successful life and a successful contribution to our society.