

Human Values Statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with our PSHEE policy and Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

As part of broader requirements relating to the quality of education and to promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, there is an explicit requirement for all schools in the UK to promote what are referred to in the legislation as 'British Values'.

These are defined as:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

Although the school whole-heartedly endorses and promotes these values, we do not see them as exclusively British and to refer to them as such would not be a true reflection of the ethos of our school and could cause offence in a multi-cultural community such as ours.

Since being able to list or name these values does not indicate understanding of them, we do not expect our children and students to do so, but rather to embody them in their behaviour and especially in the way they treat other people.

Regardless of the statutory duty to do so, we have always promoted, through our curriculum and policies, what we see as fundamental human values and these are reflected in our Code of Conduct and Staff Code of Conduct. They include:

- the right of the members of any society to decide how and by whom they are governed.
- respect for the fact that the laws of the country in which we live have been instated by democratically elected representatives, and therefore represent, as far as is possible in a modern democracy, the collective will of the people and apply equally to all.
- the freedom of every individual to think and believe whatever they like, and to express and act on those thoughts and beliefs within the law of the land as long as they do not harm anyone else or inhibit anyone else's freedom to do so.

We believe that these three values more than encompass the spirit of what is meant by 'British values' in the legislation, and we bring these principles to the children through our expectations of them and in our own behaviour. We also promote them as ideas, through the curriculum in age-appropriate ways throughout the school, beginning with stories, conversations and interactions in the Kindergarten and Lower School and developing into conscious, guided discussions in weekly Religion and Global Issues lessons in the Middle and High School.

The St Michael Steiner School

This statement is published in the Student, Staff and Parent Handbooks so that everyone is clear about the values that are promoted in the school.

As well as ensuring that our own staff respect these human values, we ensure that any visiting speakers or teachers – whether invited by staff or by students – are aware of and respect them. Visitors are always appropriately supervised.