

Stepping Stones School



Values Education Policy 2025-2027

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INTENTION

At Stepping Stones we raise standards by promoting a school ethos which is underpinned by core values. These values support the development of the whole child as a reflective learner within a calm, caring, happy and purposeful atmosphere. We support the child as a reflective learner, the whole child's social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and moral development and promote quality teaching and learning so they become learners for life. We develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes in school and at home that enable our pupils to develop as reflective learners and grow to be stable, educated and civil adults.

To ensure our pupils are aware that positive human values make the world a better place we focus on four core values: Respect, Trust, Tolerance, Kindness.

We then explore 15 other values on a rotating timetable to give a range of experiences and opportunities for the children to develop skills for life and learning. These values are: Courage, Co-operation, Humility, Friendship, Happiness, Caring, Responsibility, Freedom, Thoughtfulness, Unity, Positivity, Understanding, Hope, Honesty and Patience.

Expectations at Stepping Stones: In order for the values to be meaningful to the pupils, our staff understand that the basic needs of children are to be loved, to feel secure and know clearly what is expected of them, to be valued themselves and to have a balance of activities including active/passive; quiet/talking; communicating/reflective; taught skills/exploratory work. We recognise that they require help to develop relationships, to develop self-awareness and a knowledge of the world outside of themselves, including external exploration and internal reflection.

IMPLEMENTATION

Teaching and Learning

We have a programme of a weekly circle time that introduces the focus value(s) for the week, and daily meetings that explore the value(s) further. Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in exploring their understanding of values. At the daily meetings pupils are encouraged to discuss their achievements, and to make nominations - informing us of anyone who has displayed/used the focus value with them that day.

If a nominated child shows the value of the week consistently throughout the week they will earn the value band for the week as a physical token to remind them that they have achieved recognition for the set value. This will be awarded at the Friday celebration meeting.

There is direct teaching about values in our weekly SEMH lessons. These sessions provide opportunities for personal reflection, moral discourse and appropriate activities which promote understanding. Lessons may explore the value in more detail, encourage pupils to reflect on the value and what it means to them and their own behaviour or discuss how we can use the value to guide our own actions. All staff model the values through their own behaviour. Values are also taught implicitly through every aspect of the curriculum.

British Values

In accordance with The Department for Education guidance we actively promote British values to ensure our pupils leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. As well as referencing British Values through our SEMH learning, each half term a discrete British Values lesson is delivered and by the end of the year each class will have completed a programme of study that covers each of the Fundamental British Values.

We recognise the multi-cultural, multi-faith and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom. Pupils are encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance and understand that while different people may hold different views about what is 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law.

At Stepping Stones we understand the Fundamental British Values as:

Democracy: The right to vote and have your say in how our country and local area is run.

Individual Liberty: The freedom to believe what you want and act as you like within the laws of our country.

The Rule of Law: All people should follow the laws in Britain. These laws are designed to protect everybody in the country.

Mutual Respect: That two people, no matter how different they are, can live harmoniously in the same society.

Tolerance of Others: To have a fair attitude towards people whose opinions, beliefs, practices, racial or ethnic background, differ from your own.

We also understand the vital role we have 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.

Ways We Explore Our British Values

Democracy: Democracy is embedded at the school. Children are always listened to by adults and are taught to listen carefully and with concern to each other, respecting the right of every individual to have their opinions and voices heard. Pupils also have the opportunity to air their opinions and ideas through our Pupil Voice and regular questionnaires. Our House Captains work not only to solve issues that the children raise but also have input into their curriculum and the standards of the school.

The Rule of Law: The importance of Laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout regular school days. Pupils 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. Learning about authorities such as the Police and Fire Service help reinforce this message.

Individual Liberty: Within school, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for our pupils to make choices safely, through provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons. Whether it be through choice of learning challenge, of how they record, of participation in our social skills opportunities, pupils are given the freedom to make choices.

Mutual Respect: Mutual respect is at the heart of our values. Children learn that their actions have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect. The children know and understand that it is expected and imperative that respect is shown to everyone, whatever differences we may have and to everything, however big or small.

Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs: Due to the size of our school, at Stepping Stones there is limited cultural diversity, therefore we place a great emphasis on promoting diversity with the children. Opportunities are regularly planned to address this issue either directly or through the inclusion of stories and celebrations from a variety of faiths and cultures. Our RE and PSHE teaching reinforce this. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school.

Teacher Behaviour

In order to try to meet the needs of children, staff always try to be consistent in their own behaviour and in their expectations of the children. They value all the children, display great patience and listen carefully to children, focusing on and emphasising the positive. They face reality and help pupils to come to terms with difficult issues as they arise, such as death, they only disapprove of poor behaviour, never the child and they try to make time for one another and are mutually supportive. They speak quietly and avoid shouting, have a good sense of humour and communicate with parents through the Dojo app to ensure that they appreciate the school's values and to ensure that there is a common understanding. Our teachers are valued by the governors and by the community.

Reflective Thinking

Teachers are especially mindful of the activities that promote positive thinking and incorporate these into the day and their teaching as much as possible. These include creating a peaceful climate in school and on the school site, taking children to beautiful places to experience peaceful places and encourage them to value them. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets for their work, behaviour and values and in the assessment of their own work.

Time is given in class for pupils to respond to some of the basic needs within us: friendship, love co-operation, to clarify their understanding of values and enabling children to sit and work in silent reflection to think through their own thoughts, including weekly relaxation activities, visualisation and breathing.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers receive a Values Newsletter each half term with an overview of the values that will be covered that term. They are informed of the weekly focus value(s) via the Class Dojo app and the weekly digital newsletter. A Home Values Activity is shared each week where the children can complete a values task at home with their parents/carers. Each week parents/carers can make values nominations if they have seen their child display the week's focus value(s) at home. On a Friday the names of the children who have earned a values band are published on Class Dojo.

Journeys to School

Taxi escorts are encouraged to identify children who are using our school values during their journey. These children can receive a nomination as part of their daily meeting.

IMPACT

Benefits for the Pupils

When children are expected to be reflective about values they behave more calmly and make purposeful choices, they are able to concentrate, self regulate and reflect more on their own behaviour; showing self-awareness and self-acceptance. Children are more considerate to others and take a greater responsibility for their own actions. Their self-confidence and self-esteem improve and they know themselves better and are able to relate to others more effectively. Children are able to use self-regulating strategies alongside adults and independently.

Benefits in Taxi Journeys & the Home

Values based language becomes intrinsic to the child and his/her family's vocabulary. Behaviour is improved within taxis and at home, particularly through practice of our 4 core values.

This policy should be viewed in conjunction with the PSHE Policy and Behaviour Policy.