



Promoting fundamental British Values as part of Social Moral Spiritual Vocational and Cultural Education (SMSVCE) at St Thomas More Catholic First School

This is a Catholic school which seeks to live out the values of Jesus Christ. We promote these values by word and deeds, and Catholic doctrine and practice therefore permeates every aspect of the school's activity. We provide a Catholic curriculum, which is broad and balanced, recognising that every pupil is unique and is created in the image of God (Gen 1:27). Our curriculum is designed to enable every pupil to discern their vocation and to be well equipped to follow it as active citizens in service to the world. We provide a wide range of extra activities and strong pastoral support. We incorporate democratic principles, value the rule of the law, support individual liberty and foster a community in which different faiths and beliefs are respected.

We encourage pupils to respect the right of people who have a faith or belief system that is different to theirs by covering other faiths and visiting different places of worship. This is not the same as promoting other faiths or any beliefs that are contrary to the Catholic teachings but seeks to inform them about Judaism and Islam as part of our topic work.

It is expected that pupils should 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. As a Catholic school we teach about the laws of the Catholic faith, but take particular care to explore the relationship between state and religious law.

We promote the fundamental British values of respect for the law, democracy, equality and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs'. These derive from Christian values and are at the heart of what we teach in our school. Our Catholic belief that all are made in the image and likeness of God explicitly values the equality of all, rejects discrimination of any kind, and by extension welcomes diversity of culture. As Pope Francis recently wrote:

"What we are called to respect in each person is the first of all his life, his physical integrity, his ideas and his political choices. We are therefore called to think, speak and write respectfully of the other, not only in his presence, but always and everywhere, avoiding unfair criticism or defamation. Families, schools, religious teaching and all forms of media have a role to play in achieving this goal." (Message of Pope Francis to Muslims throughout the world for the end of Ramadam, 2013.)

When teaching right and wrong we also clarify the Catholic message underpinning it e.g. conscience should be informed by the teaching of Jesus and the Church; that right and wrong are moral matters and not just legalities.

We seek to teach that democracy demands diversity of belief and opinion or it is not a democracy. However Freedom of Speech and Human Rights must be considered at all times. By actively promoting the values we challenge opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values. Freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles within which freedom is valued.