



## British Values Statement – Lower School February 2019

British values are defined by the Department for Education as:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

These are implicitly embedded in Steiner education and the curriculum and ethos of Cambridge Steiner School. All staff are expected to uphold and promote these values. Listed below are some of the ways in which staff work with these values in the lower school.

### **Democracy: making decisions together**

Throughout the school, staff will encourage children to see their role as an individual within a bigger social structure, ensuring that the children know their views count, that they value each other's views and values, and are able to talk about their feelings. Class plays, games, circle time and dancing lessons, as well as many other group activities, give plenty of opportunities for children to practise their social skills. On our many class trips, pupils learn to balance their own wish for freedom with the needs of the group.

The Class 5 curriculum covers the origins of democracy and its importance as a concept and principle, and this is met again in more depth in later main lessons. In older classes, staff can demonstrate democracy in action, for example, by helping a class to agree on a decision through a vote, or holding a mock election to teach students about the electoral system in the UK. Our School/Class Council system is a further example of this.

Staff can support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children should be given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

The School Coordination Team (school management) is itself a body of people who make decisions together.

### **The rule of law: understanding that rules matter**

Staff will help children to understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and to distinguish right from wrong. Staff sometimes collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviour, and ensure that all children understand that rules apply to everyone. Our Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy is of central importance in the school and is explained to the children so that they understand our expectations. Through application of the policy, they learn that there are consequences if rules are not followed.

Games played in the playground are sometimes subject to rules set by adults, but often the rules are developed by the children through negotiation with each other, and we encourage this approach.

Stories told as part of the curriculum in Classes 1-3 provide imaginative understanding of moral and social practice, good and evil, justice and redemption. In Class 6, the study of the Romans gives a wonderful opportunity to consider the importance of the rule of law.

**Individual liberty: freedom for all**

At the Cambridge Steiner School, we encourage children to develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example, through allowing them to take appropriate risks (eg. tree climbing), to develop their creative self-expression through music, drama, Eurythmy, literary endeavours, art and craft, talking about their experiences and learning through various forms of safe and constructive feedback. Staff encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand that everyone is free to have different opinions.

**Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated**

The Cambridge Steiner School promotes an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where differing views, faiths, cultures and races are valued, and where children are encouraged to engage with the wider community through acts of community such as busking for charitable causes and carol singing for the elderly at an old people's home. We have recently developed links with the Cambridge Refugee Centre, raising money for their children's games equipment.

Our pupils are drawn from many different countries and cultures, which encourages tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures. This diversity of nationality encourages the children to learn about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions, and they learn how to share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences. We particularly encourage teachers to celebrate the different festivals belonging to the children in their classes, with help and support from their parents. All students learn two languages from the age of six, and the curriculum covers cultural aspects as well as the study of the language.

Staff encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting others' opinions. Staff are expected to promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.