

## **STATEMENT ON BRITISH VALUES AT SACRED HEART OF MARY**

At Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School we embrace the opportunity to educate our pupils in the Catholic faith but, as a Christian worshipping community, pupils are also reminded of their place at the heart of a culturally diverse and multi-faith modern Britain. The right of each person to be respected and valued equally regardless of ability, gender, faith, heritage or race is clearly articulated in our mission statement and is central to gospel values which are the foundation of all aspects of policy and practice in our school.

Our school fully appreciates the uniqueness of each individual and we are committed to enabling and empowering our young people to grow as individuals and to become responsible citizens in the community and country in which they live.

We are fully committed to the promotion and reinforcement of the fundamental British values of:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

This commitment is evident and explicitly expressed via the formal curriculum and also implicitly via the experiences offered to pupils beyond the classroom.

### **Democracy**

At Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School adults listen to the views of pupils and value their opinions. Pupils have formal opportunities to have their voices heard through School Council, Academic Reviews with Pastoral Teams and interviews with members of the Senior Leadership Team and the 'family' ethos of the school encourages pupils to share their views with staff informally when the need arises. School Council, House Captains, Form Captains Music/Drama Games and Liturgical Reps Team are the result of pupil elections and all pupils holding these posts of responsibility canvas the opinions of their peers and represent these views to staff. Staff are also encouraged to share their views and concerns via the Performance Appraisal processes for teaching and support staff, regular meetings and a well-established and structured system of Monitoring and Support. There is a strong sense of democratic responsibility across the school and the House system makes a significant contribution to this by facilitating and encouraging joint ventures and strong partnerships between older and younger pupils and staff.

## **The Rule of Law**

The Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School is a well-ordered community whose members are committed to upholding the Code of Conduct. Our pupils are well aware of the need for laws and rules to keep individuals safe, they know their responsibilities in maintaining a safe and well-ordered environment both within and beyond the school community, and they have a clear understanding of the rewards and sanctions used in school. The 'Rule of Law' supports and reinforces the Gospel message of 'Love Thy Neighbour' and, indeed, the 10 commandments which form the basis of the Christian Code of Conduct.

## **Individual Liberty**

Pupils are actively encouraged to be independent learners and to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. They are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are taught how to use these rights to best effect. Pupils are given the freedom to make choices of the extent to which they participate in numerous extra-curricular experiences.

## **Mutual Respect**

At Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School concern and respect for one another define our relationships and our modus vivendi is rooted in our response to the most important commandment of all; 'Love one another as I have loved you'. Assemblies constantly promote respect and the importance of courtesy and consideration for the needs of others. Pupils are taught the importance of self-respect, honest and open communication with others and fair play and they are encouraged to work collaboratively and to value others' opinions.

## **Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs**

Our Mission Statement is explicit in articulating the need for all members of our school community to respect the views of those from particular faith backgrounds and those from none. In RE pupils are taught about other faiths and assemblies often give information relating to the religious practices and traditions of other belief systems. There are many non-Catholic members of staff and members of the 6<sup>th</sup> Form who often lead assemblies and play a full part in the liturgical life of the school.

At Sacred Heart of Mary the formal curriculum, as well as the ethos that permeates the school, plays a significant role in giving pupils insight into the lives, beliefs experiences and traditions of others and in teaching pupils to respect and value cultural diversity as well as the richness of 'difference'.