



Vita et Pax
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Vita et Pax Preparatory School
Established 1936

British Values Statement

Policy Originator	Head Teacher
Approved by	Governing Body
Date Approved	1 March 2026
Status	Statutory
Review Period	Annually (next: March 2027)

1. Introduction and Legal Context

Vita et Pax Preparatory School actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values underpin our school ethos of 'Vita et Pax' — Life and Peace — and are woven through everything we do, from the curriculum and assemblies to pastoral care and the daily culture of the school.

This statement responds to the requirements of:

- The Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSRs) 2014, Part 2 — Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of pupils.
- DfE guidance: Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (November 2014).
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent duty).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- Ofsted/ISI inspection framework expectations for SMSC and British values.

The school does not promote any partisan political views. Where political issues arise in teaching, pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views in line with ISSRs Part 2, Paragraph 5(e).

2. Democracy

Pupils learn the value of democracy and the importance of having a voice. Democracy is embedded in school life through:

- School Council: Elected pupil representatives from each class meet regularly to discuss ideas and proposals. Elections are held annually using a secret ballot, giving pupils a genuine experience of

democratic processes.

- Pupil voice: Pupils are regularly consulted through surveys, circle time and class discussions. Their views inform school decisions, including behaviour expectations, school meals, playground activities and charity fundraising.
- Classroom debate: Pupils are encouraged to express opinions, listen to others respectfully and consider different perspectives in lessons across the curriculum.
- Curriculum: Democracy is taught through History (e.g., Ancient Greece, the suffragettes, the development of Parliament), Geography (how communities and countries are governed) and PSHE/Citizenship (voting, rights and responsibilities).
- House system: Pupils elect House Captains and contribute to house meetings, learning collaborative decision-making.
- Mock elections: During national elections, the school holds age-appropriate mock elections to help pupils understand the democratic process.

3. The Rule of Law

Pupils learn to distinguish right from wrong and to understand the importance of laws and rules for a well-ordered community:

- School rules and behaviour expectations are clearly communicated, fairly applied and understood by all pupils. Children know the reasons behind rules — they are not arbitrary but exist to keep everyone safe and to ensure fairness.
- Consequences and rewards: The Behaviour & Discipline Policy provides graduated, fair sanctions and consistent positive reinforcement. Pupils learn that actions have consequences and that the rules apply to everyone equally.
- Curriculum: The rule of law is explored through History (e.g., Magna Carta, the development of laws), RE (moral teachings across faiths), and PSHE (rights and responsibilities, justice, fairness).
- Visitors: The school invites visits from the police, fire service and community representatives who explain how laws protect us.
- Anti-bullying: The school's zero-tolerance approach to bullying models the principle that everyone has the right to feel safe and that harmful behaviour is not tolerated.
- Restorative practice: Where rules are broken, the school uses restorative approaches to help pupils understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility and make amends.

4. Individual Liberty

Pupils are encouraged to make choices safely, knowing that they are in a secure and supportive environment:

- Freedom of expression: Pupils are free to express their ideas, opinions and beliefs in a respectful manner. Classrooms are safe spaces where questions are welcome and intellectual curiosity is encouraged.
- Choice and agency: Pupils choose from a range of extra-curricular clubs, have input into learning topics, and take on leadership roles (School Council, House Captains, Prefects, Reading Buddies).
- Personal development: The PSHE curriculum supports pupils to understand their rights, develop self-confidence, and build resilience.

- Online safety and digital citizenship: Pupils are taught how to exercise individual liberty responsibly online, including understanding consent, privacy and the risks of sharing personal information, in line with KCSIE 2025 and the Online Safety Act 2023.
- Anti-discrimination: Pupils learn that individual liberty includes freedom from bullying, prejudice and discrimination. The school challenges stereotypes and teaches children that everyone is different and that difference is to be respected.
- Growth mindset: Pupils are taught that making mistakes is part of learning and that perseverance and effort are valued alongside achievement.

5. Mutual Respect

Respect is a core value at Vita et Pax, rooted in the school's Catholic ethos of love, compassion and peace:

- Modelled by adults: Staff model respectful behaviour in all interactions — with pupils, parents and each other. The school expects courtesy, kindness and consideration from everyone in the community.
- School culture: Mutual respect is a fundamental school rule. Children are taught to listen when others speak, value others' contributions, and treat everyone with dignity regardless of background.
- Assemblies: Weekly assemblies celebrate acts of kindness, respect and community service. Children are recognised for helping others.
- Curriculum: RE lessons explore the concept of respect across different faiths and cultures. PSHE teaches empathy, conflict resolution and healthy relationships.
- Anti-bullying: The Anti-Bullying Policy explicitly promotes mutual respect and addresses all forms of disrespectful behaviour, including prejudice-based bullying.
- Collaborative learning: Group work, pair work, and team activities build skills in cooperation, compromise and valuing others' strengths.

6. Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs

As a Catholic school that welcomes children of all faiths and none, Vita et Pax actively promotes an understanding and appreciation of diversity:

- Religious education: The RE curriculum covers Christianity and the major world religions (Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism). Pupils learn about the beliefs, practices, festivals and values of different faith communities.
- Cultural celebrations: The school celebrates a wide range of cultural events including Diwali, Eid, Chinese New Year, Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter, reflecting the diverse backgrounds of the school community.
- International Evening: An annual event where families share food, music, dress and traditions from their cultures, celebrating the school's rich diversity.
- Visiting speakers: Representatives from different faiths and community groups are invited to speak in assemblies and RE lessons.
- Challenging prejudice: Stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory language are always challenged. Staff use age-appropriate language to explain why prejudice is harmful and help pupils develop empathy.

- Protected characteristics: Through PSHE and the wider curriculum, pupils develop an understanding of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 at an age-appropriate level.

7. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development

British values are an integral part of pupils' wider SMSC development. The school promotes SMSC through:

- Spiritual: Reflection, prayer, worship, awe and wonder in learning, appreciation of nature and beauty, and exploration of beliefs and meaning.
- Moral: Understanding right from wrong, considering consequences, developing a moral compass, and discussing ethical dilemmas in an age-appropriate way.
- Social: Teamwork, collaboration, community service, fundraising for charity, understanding social responsibility, and building positive relationships.
- Cultural: Appreciating the arts (music, drama, art, literature), understanding British heritage and traditions, and valuing the cultural diversity of modern Britain.

SMSC opportunities are mapped across the curriculum and identified in lesson planning. The school audits SMSC provision annually to ensure coverage and quality.

8. Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation

The promotion of British values is central to the school's Prevent duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The school:

- Builds pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting critical thinking, open discussion and respect for others.
- Ensures all staff receive Prevent training as part of their safeguarding training, enabling them to identify signs of radicalisation or extremism.
- Has clear referral procedures for any concerns — staff report to the DSL (Darren May), who makes a Prevent referral if appropriate.
- Uses filtering and monitoring on the school network to restrict access to extremist material online.
- Does not provide a platform for extremist speakers or groups.
- Reports any concerns about extremism to the DSL immediately, in line with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

9. British Values in the EYFS

British values are introduced to children in the EYFS through age-appropriate activities:

- Democracy: Turn-taking, voting on stories or activities, sharing resources fairly.
- Rule of law: Simple class rules with pictures, learning to follow routines and instructions, understanding 'kind hands' and 'kind words'.
- Individual liberty: Choosing activities during free-flow play, expressing preferences, developing independence in self-care.

- Mutual respect: Learning to share, take turns, say 'please' and 'thank you', and play cooperatively.
- Tolerance: Exploring different cultures through stories, music, food tasting, dressing-up clothes and celebrations.

10. Monitoring and Evidence

The school monitors the promotion of British values through:

- Learning walks and lesson observations — identifying SMSC and British values in teaching.
- Pupil voice — interviews and surveys to gauge understanding of British values.
- Curriculum planning — SMSC/British values are mapped and tracked across subjects.
- Assembly themes — a planned programme ensuring all five values are covered each term.
- Behaviour and incident logs — monitoring for any concerns related to extremism, prejudice or intolerance.
- Annual SMSC audit — a whole-school review to identify strengths and areas for development.

This statement is reviewed annually by the Governing Body and updated to reflect the school's evolving practice.

11. Related Policies

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour & Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- RSE / PSHE Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Equality & Accessibility Plan

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