

Policy C48: The Promotion of British Values

The promotion of British Values Policy

This policy has been written in line with:

The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
ISI Regulatory Handbook Re: Quality of Education (January 2015)

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48.1. Introduction

Queen Margaret's seeks to promote excellence inside and outside the classroom. We believe that all girls at QM have the opportunity to learn and make excellent progress and the education we provide prepares girls for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in British society.

QM provides a full-time supervised mathematical, scientific, linguistic, human, social, aesthetic, creative technological and physical, education for all girls in its care. Curricular subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of the girls and does not undermine the fundamental British values (FBV) of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Indeed within the Spiritual, moral, social and cultural developmental context of our girls, we actively promote these values and principles by the ethos and education throughout Queen Margaret's.

48.2. Democracy

At Queen Margaret's the principle of democracy is consistently reinforced with the democratic process being employed for important decisions within the school community and beyond, for instance the nomination and election of pupils to positions of responsibility which include the different school councils (Charity Council, International Council & School Council), the prefects and monitors and the positions of Head girl and Deputy Head girls. Democracy is explored in more depth in the History, Government and Politics and Religious Studies curriculums as well as in assemblies and enrichment activities including the King Society for Academic Scholars, Amnesty International and the Model United Nations (MUN). Staff and girls use opportunities such as General or Local elections to hold mock elections to promote fundamental British values and provide girls with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view.

48.3. 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 and through school assemblies. As a part of our induction process all girls when they join the school are made aware of our Discipline (A4 & B3) and anti-Bullying (A8 & B1) policies. Girls are taught the value and reasons behind rules, their own responsibilities around the rules and the consequences of their actions when these rules are broken. Visits from authorities, including the 'Magistrates in the Community' (MIC) programme form part of our Academic Extension programme and help reinforce this message.

48.4. Individual Liberty

At Queen Margaret's, girls are actively encouraged to make independent choices knowing that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for girls to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. Girls are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised on how to exercise these safely, for example through E-Safety training as a whole school and also as part of the Academic Extension lessons. Whether it be through learning challenges or through participation in the Enrichment and Extension opportunities at Queen Margaret's, girls are given the freedom to make choices.

48.5. Mutual Respect

Mutual Respect is at the core of our school ethos and is modelled by girls and staff alike. Queen Margaret's promotes respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning environments as well as enrichment activities such as sport, music and drama. Girls are actively engaged in many charity fundraising activities and there are opportunities for links with the local community, for example Escrick Primary School, Derwent House Care Home and Wheldrake Care Home, which help girls to experience a life beyond QM.

Girls are always able to voice their opinions and we foster an environment where girls have respect for individuality and difference. The school develops mutual respect throughout the curriculum and our school ethos promotes the values of respect and responsibility. The School Council, International Council and weekly meetings with Prefects and Monitors also provide girls with an arena where they can bring up and discuss any issues that may undermine the school ethos.

48.6. Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

This is achieved through equipping students with the ability to understand their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity within the school community. Assemblies and Visiting Speakers at Chapel Services (which have recently included representatives from Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and indeed no faith at all) supported by learning in RS, History and Academic Extension allows girls to appreciate and respect many different faiths and beliefs and to reinforce non-discrimination against 'protected characteristics'. We also run numerous overseas Educational Visits throughout the academic year from which our girls gain valuable experience of other cultures and languages. This is even extended to the school catering where special food 'theme' days are organised to celebrate both British and World events and to coincide with events inside school, for example the visit of a German Theatre group.

Queen Margaret's welcomes girls from all cultural and religious backgrounds.

48.7 Strategy

The Senior Leadership Team undertake a policy review to ensure the active promotion of 'fundamental British values' and the principles in Part 2, paragraph 5(b) of the Regulatory requirements are embodied within our Curricular Policy and SMSC Schemes of work.

All staff are trained on the importance of the promotion of British Values and develop strategies within their departments as to how these can be embodied. All Heads of Departments (HoDs), as a result of these discussions, include the results in their Departmental Handbooks and Schemes of Work.

Governors are informed of the importance of British Values and encouraged to assist in the monitoring of these in their school visits.

48.8 Auditing and Monitoring

The Active promotion of fundamental British values, especially as a part of the SMSC development of girls is very much 'infused' within the day-to-day operation of Queen Margaret's, however examples of the promotion of FBV's should be evidenced in the Academic Extension programme, in School Assemblies, individual departmental schemes of work and the work of the School Council to name a few. Regular monitoring of its inclusion is undertaken by the Deputy Head and any recommendations as a result are included in the annual policy review.

48.9 Policy Review

This policy is kept under regular review by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that we are providing the structure for the best possible educational experience for the girls in the School alongside any changes to the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards. The Governors are kept fully apprised of the auditing and monitoring of this policy through the Governors' Education Committee.

Stuart A I Thompson

Deputy Head (Enrichment & Extension)

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