

## **A statement of British Values**

Aquinas Church of England Education Trust (the Trust) is committed to serving its local national and international community. It recognises the multi-cultural, multi faith and ever-changing landscape of the United Kingdom. It also understands the vital role it has in ensuring that groups or individuals within any environment are not subjected to intimidation or radicalisation by those wishing to unduly, or illegally, influence them. Our academies foster a strong sense of belonging both to their school community and as a citizen of Britain with the responsibilities that citizenship brings. The Trust and our academies recognise the statutory requirements to promote British Values as a part of the curriculum and does so whilst appreciating the backgrounds of all pupils and their families.

The Trust has an Equality Policy, which follows equal opportunities guidance and guarantees that there will be no discrimination against any individual or group, regardless of faith, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, political or financial status, or similar. It seeks to serve all so that everyone feels a sense of belonging.

In response to the Department for Education's guidance on promoting British values in schools, the Trust and our academies seek to ensure young people leave school prepared for life in modern Britain and are members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background.

The 'Prevent' strategy sets out these values and all schools have a duty to 'actively promote' the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs together with a clear strategy for embedding these values; this is undertaken by all of our academies

### Democracy

Democracy is a vital part of the Trust's day to day operations with staff and pupils being able to voice their views and concerns through central Trust networks and initiatives and at academy level through school councils. Pupils have the opportunity to elect their representatives and have first-hand experience of democracy. The academy also participates in the Trust wide initiative of promoting training for schools councils which has had its core the importance of democracy. Pupils are kept apprised of any significant operational changes at the academy and encouraged to express their views and participate in any discussion. Similarly, staff have the opportunity to elect representation to the academy advisory councils.

### The Rule of Law

The importance of laws that are applicable to the Trust and our academies and are regularly reinforced with pupils throughout the school day. Primarily these center on behaviour which is regularly covered with pupils day through assemblies, worship and Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). Pupils are taught the value of and reasons for the laws that protect and govern us together with the consequences of breaking laws together with the need for restorative justice. External agencies such as the police are invited to support the work of the academy in promoting the rule of law. Staff are supported through Trust policy and training.

### Individual liberty

All pupils are actively encouraged to make choices at school knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and make suitable choices. Teachers advise pupils how to do this in a safe way through the promotion of e-safety, citizenship and PSHE. Pupils regularly make choices in terms of extra curricula activities. Staff are also supported within the workplace to exercise their individual

freedoms in terms of data protection, training, career, work-life balance and wellbeing through Trust policy and the support they receive at each academy.

#### Mutual respect

The Trust's ethos and values coupled with its Christian ethos focuses on the need for mutual respect and kindness towards all. This is reflected in all Trust policies and at each academy, the behaviour policy supports this and it is reinforced on a regular basis in assemblies and the daily life of the academy.

#### Tolerance of those of Different Faith and Beliefs

The Trust has a diverse pupil and staff body. It promotes not only tolerance but acceptance of people from different faiths and beliefs. This is achieved through enhancing the individual's understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience diversity. Teaching across the Trust explores other beliefs and prejudices as well as tackling prejudice-based bullying. Other faiths and beliefs are explored through each academy's religious education curriculum. The Trust and our academies celebrate the language and cultures represented within a diverse community. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning. The Trust's Equality Policy and objectives promotes such tolerance.