

Aquinas Statement of British Values

Aquinas 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. The Trust fosters a strong sense of belonging both to the Trust community of academies and the stakeholders it serves and as a citizen of Britain with the responsibilities that citizenship brings.

The Trust has an Equality Policy, which 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 seeks to ensure that the young people at its academies 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.

Democracy

Democracy is a vital part of the Trust and its academy's day to day operations with pupils being able to voice their views and concerns through their school council. Pupils have the opportunity to elect their representatives and have first-hand experience of democracy. The Trust promotes and the academies participates in an initiative promoting training for schools councils which has at its core the importance of democracy. Pupils are kept apprised of any significant operational changes at their academy and encouraged to express their views and participate in any discussion.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws that are applicable to academies are regularly reinforced with pupils throughout the school day. Primarily these center on behaviour which is regularly covered with pupils 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.

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.

Mutual respect

The Trust and academies ethos and values coupled with the Christian ethos focuses on the need for mutual respect and kindness towards all. The academies' behaviour policies support this and it is reinforced on a regular basis in assemblies and the daily life of the Trust and academies.

Tolerance of those of Different Faith and Beliefs

The academies with the Trust have a diverse pupil and staff body. The Trust promotes not only tolerance but acceptance of people from different faiths and beliefs. This is achieved through enhancing pupils understanding of their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience diversity. Assemblies explore other beliefs and prejudices as well as tackling prejudice-based bullying. Other faiths and beliefs are explored through the academies' religious education curriculum. The academies celebrate the language and culture represented within the diverse pupil body. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning.