

Sophia HIGH SCHOOL

BRITISH AND INTERNATIONAL VALUES POLICY

2025 - 2026

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BRITISH AND INTERNATIONAL VALUES POLICY

Sophia High School promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students through a variety of ways.

We believe in developing globally-minded students who embody both British and universal international values. Our curriculum and programmes cultivate engaged citizens who appreciate diversity while driving collective action.

In summary, we aim to provide:

- A balanced, broad and rich future skills curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to engage with the wider world and think about their place within it;
- Opportunities for pupils to actively engage with the democratic process, for example the Changemakers/Student Council.
- A varied assembly programme through which teachers and visitors present topics which help pupils to reflect upon themes which help foster an understanding of different cultural traditions, appreciate British culture, and understand right and wrong;
- Enrichment across the whole school which includes creative and cultural opportunities.
- We also ensure that the promotion of fundamental International and British Values is fully embedded in the school ethos and curriculum.

Fundamental British Values

Sophia High School places great importance on promoting the fundamental British and Universal values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs*. In line with the guidance provided by the Department for Education, Sophia High School views this as a way of also helping to demonstrate how the school meets the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002, in the provision of SMSC.

Students gain firsthand understanding of democratic processes through student council elections, surveys to voice opinions, and current event discussions. Classroom rules, behaviour policies, and laws are covered to instil the rule of law. We encourage student independence while providing choices balanced with responsibility. Respect and tolerance are embedded in our inclusive culture.

- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England. [*Prevent Duty Guidance \(2023\)](#)

By promoting these values, staff and pupils feel empowered to challenge opinions or behaviours in school which are contrary to fundamental International and British values. Sophia High School aims to:

- enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of

Britain and their home/host country;

- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in Britain;
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people; and Fundamental International Values

Sophia High also champions universal international values prioritised by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

- Human Rights
- Equality
- Sustainability
- Partnership

Our commitment to human rights and equality is reflected in our ethical practices, diversity, and accessibility. We integrate sustainability across operations and curriculum. Mutually beneficial partnerships drive our success.

Global Citizenship Education

Education for Sustainable Development, and Global Citizenship Education, run throughout the work students do at SHS. We do not see these as promoting an alternative to Fundamental British Values, rather that they align both values to show how a global perspective is also a British perspective.

By adopting a global perspective to education, business, industry and the SDGs, students align their thinking to solving global issues, with a British perspective.

Courses explore world cultures, global issues like inequality and climate change, and ways to drive progress through innovation and cooperation. Students gain intercultural awareness, problem-solving skills, and passion to improve society.

By balancing British and international values, Sophia High develops empowered students able to succeed in today's interconnected world. We believe broad perspectives paired with integrity sow seeds for a thriving future

Fundamental British Values in Early Years (Foundation Programme) and the Primary School

Democracy

At Sophia High School, democracy is a core part of the school's life. Children will learn how democracy works by voting for school councillors for each year group and running the school council meetings on a democratic basis to make sure that the pupil voice is listened to and that children's views are part of the decision-making process in school. Surveys and questionnaires are carried out to ensure that the pupil voice is listened to about matters directly affecting the children. National events are used as opportunities to teach democracy with reference to real life situations, for example, the General Election, National Science Week, The Queen's Funeral and King's Coronation, the state opening of Parliament and the story of Guy Fawkes.

Early Years pupils will participate in activities appropriate for their age, easily understood by children of their developing cognitive level. This will include group votes facilitated by their teacher for items related to the content of their lessons and tasks/challenges to begin to develop a sense of democratic process and the value of a vote.

The Rule of Law

Our School Code of Conduct, classroom rules and a broad system of rewards and sanctions mean that pupils understand how there are rights and wrongs which must be understood and that we must all behave according to the rules in school. From an early age, children learn about people who help us in society. We encourage children to respect the roles of people who help in their respective locations e.g. the Armed Forces, Police, Health Services, Thames Water, the LifeBoat Service and the Fire Service. The e-Safety awareness which is taught as part of the Computing curriculum and is introduced as the introductory unit at the start of the Autumn Term, Learning Effectively Online. We teach children about the core value of "the rule of law" and how it is there to protect us.

Individual Liberty

Sophia High School promotes choices for its pupils and aims to equip pupils with the tools needed to be responsible individuals. Teachers encourage independence and support pupils as they grow more able to make their own decisions. From their earliest days in the Sophia High School children are taught how to choose activities, listen to others, share and express their views.

There are many extra-curricular clubs on offer from Sophia High School and this is an important part of learning to be an individual and having the freedom to choose new activities in the safe environment of school. In assemblies and through chosen themes, pupils learn about human rights,

hear the life stories of some inspirational individuals and are encouraged to think about what makes a good role model.

Pupils take part in the creation of digital notebooks to track their learning and to give them the opportunity to reflect on their personal strengths and interests and to think about what would help them to achieve their goals. Early Years pupils complete this with the help of their parents and this is shared and celebrated within their groups.

Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Sophia High School supports an ethos of mutual respect. In assemblies and lessons the principles of treating others with respect, listening to each other's views and striving to do one's best support these values. At Sophia High School pupils are taught that prejudice-based or any other form of bullying should not be tolerated and pupils are taught how to treat all individuals fairly whilst acknowledging that everyone is different. We value and celebrate the diverse heritages of everybody and we also value and celebrate being part of Britain. In school assemblies we celebrate traditions e.g Harvest Festival, Christmas, Easter, Eid, Diwali, New Year, Chinese New Year etc. Remembrance Day is always marked with a reflective assembly.

Children have the opportunity to take part in curriculum events which enable them to sample food from different cultures, to explore music from different cultures, and create artwork based on a range of cultural influences and traditions. The English curriculum includes the study of literature from different cultural heritages.

Charities are supported in school throughout the year and these include both local and national causes. An explanation of how charities help those in need, underpins the fundamental British value of mutual respect and tolerance.

Fundamental British/International Values in the Senior School

The list below shows the understanding and knowledge expected of Senior School pupils as a result of the way in which Sophia High School promotes fundamental International/British values:

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety – as covered through aspects of the curriculum and assemblies;
- an understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence – covered in 'mock elections,' specific trips, aspect of the curriculum and assemblies;

- an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law – aspects of the curriculum and assemblies;
- an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour – through aspects of the curriculum and assemblies;
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination – as covered through promoting the school ethos, assemblies, the pupil code of conduct and implementation of other key school policies;
- an understanding of the sustainable development goals and values upheld by our roles and responsibilities as global citizens.

International Student Cohort

Many of our students are not based in the UK, and we acknowledge that the laws governing their country of residence may be different. We believe that cultural sensitivity must be shown when dealing with conflicting laws or cultural expectations in student home countries, and respect any different laws or mandatory religious compliance. However, as a DfE accredited school under the OEAS scheme (granted accreditation September 2023), SHS follows all UK laws and DfE statutory guidance with regards to policies and best practice for students, teachers and families.