



# **Walthamstow School For Girls**

*“Neglect not the gift that is in thee”*

## **Policy Document**

# **British Values Statement**

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## British Values Policy Document

At WSFG we believe British Values are the shared values of all our communities.

We are all very proud of our school and our community of students, staff, parents, carers and Governors who work together to provide an outstanding learning environment. Every one of our 900 students is valued equally as an individual with different gifts and talents.

Our school motto is “Neglect not the gift that is in thee”.

The school has an exceptional track record of academic excellence and of supporting students in making progress from Year 7 to 11. This is achieved through a combination of high expectations and inspirational teaching and learning experiences which equip the girls with the skills to become confident and independent learners. We offer strong pastoral support and regular monitoring, target setting and dialogue with students and parents/carers. In terms of examination performance, the school is consistently amongst the top performing non-selective schools in the country.

The students take great pride in their school. They recognise the high quality of the education they receive and the rich programme of extra-curricular activities on offer and they enjoy being part of our community. Staff, likewise, recognise that this is a special environment to work in. Our teaching and support staff are of the highest calibre.

### 1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- This policy will have consideration for the following guidance:
  - Ofsted, School Inspection Handbook, 2021.
  - DfE, Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools, 2014.
- This policy is carried out in conjunction with our following other policy:
  - Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy

### 2. BACKGROUND

At Walthamstow School for Girls we value the diversity of background of all students, families and the wider school community.

The Department for Education states that:

*“Schools should 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. Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values”.*

The Department for Education defines British Values as follows:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

Our school reflects British values in all that we do. We encourage our children to be creative, unique, open-minded and independent individuals, respectful of themselves and of others in our school, our local community and the wider world. We promote values of democracy, respect and harmony for all races, cultures, faiths and beliefs. The

school promotes equal opportunities for all and systems are in place that counter racism, sexism and all other forms of discrimination and extremism whenever they occur.

### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Walthamstow School for Girls understands the importance of promoting British values through a challenging, comprehensive well-planned curriculum.
- The Headteacher and Senior Leaders will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirement to uphold British values through the methods outlined in this policy, and will ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to carry out these methods.
- Teachers and support staff will ensure that lessons are inclusive of, and sensitive to, the fundamental British Values.
- Staff are expected to seek opportunities to actively promote British Values across the school.
- Pupils are expected to treat each other and staff with respect, in line with the school's ethos and our Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy.

### **4. THE KEY BRITISH VALUES AT WALTHAMSTOW SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

At Walthamstow School for Girls, we actively promote British values in the following ways:

#### **a. Democracy**

- Election of Form Representatives in every tutor group.
- Student voice is addressed through regular form rep meetings, student focus groups, questionnaires and surveys.
- Informal voting on issues within form times and lessons.
- Students are invited to attend their parent/carer teacher consultation review meetings on an annual basis and they are encouraged to share their opinions.
- There is explicit consideration of democracy within PSHE lessons.
- There is explicit consideration of democracy within the curriculum across different subjects.
- The principles of democracy are explored in the whole curriculum e.g. turn taking, sharing and collaboration, charity, as well as during assemblies and special projects.
- Form representative meetings are well established across every year group and discuss issues such as:
  - Organising events for charity throughout the year
  - Proposing special events and activities to raise awareness for particular issues (e.g. Black History Month, International Women's Day)
  - Writing stories for the school newsletter (the Greensheet)
  - Developing a peer mentor programme, LORIC leader programme, Coaching programme
  - Leading charity initiatives e.g. Ecobrick programme
  - Improving the school environment for students, staff and visitors e.g. by raising awareness of damaged or unsuitable facilities
- Achievements are celebrated both in lessons and in termly Celebration Assemblies, and rewards are embedded into our school culture and ethos.
- We promote a school environment where questions are valued and encouraged.
- We also host an annual Parent Information Evening for each year group to ensure parents and their children are able to participate in planning for the future of the school.

#### **b. The rule of law**

- The school's ethos and code of conduct promotes and encourages respect and helps students to distinguish right from wrong.
- The Positive Behaviour for Learning and Anti-Bullying policies set out a zero tolerance baseline for any form of aggression, abuse or violence, which extends to students, staff and parents/carers.
- As a school we raise awareness of bullying in many ways:
  - Through PSHE lessons.
  - In other subjects across the curriculum.

- By raising awareness of the dangers of social media.
- By holding special drop-down days with invited guests.
- By holding regular assemblies focused on issues regarding 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 the school day, as well as when dealing with behaviour and through school assemblies.
- Through PSHE lessons students are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Occasional visits from authorities such as the Police and Fire Service help reinforce this message.
- The school also has a clear set of rules that the students are expected to adhere to. If these rules are not followed then there are sanctions that will be used.

#### **c. Individual liberty**

- We pride ourselves on a school culture and ethos that builds respect, tolerance and resilience.
- Both in and out of lessons students are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment.
- Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our GREEN and PSHE lessons.
- We have a robust anti-bullying culture (refer to Anti-Bullying Policy and Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy).
- Our school environment is one that promotes independence and individual communication. Our aim is to work towards students having full independence.
- We all work to promote students' self-esteem and positive sense of self throughout the school day and in the wider community.
- From Year 7 through to Year 11, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and are supported to learn to make safe choices that enable them to grow as individuals and reach their own potential in all aspects of their learning.
- As students move up through the school they are supported to understand their rights and personal freedoms and are given appropriate advice to enable them to make independent decisions.
- Vulnerable students are supported to make appropriate decisions and staff ensure that adults supporting them are doing so with the best interests of the student in mind.
- We conduct annual student and parent/carer surveys and use the results to inform the coming year's school development plan. We also host an annual Parent Information Evening to ensure that parents/carers are able to participate in planning for the future of the school.

#### **d. Mutual respect**

- Respect is one of the core values of our school. Our students know and understand that it is expected that respect is shown to everyone, adults and children.
- School assemblies address what respect means and how it is shown. These assemblies also focus on important contemporary issues that help to promote mutual respect.
- Staff are expected to demonstrate this in their conduct around the school.
- Displays around the school promote respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning rules, as well as our Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- Both in and out of the classroom students are helped to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, their own and other opinions, cultures and ways of life.
- Staff and students are encouraged to challenge prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour. All such incidents are recorded and where necessary acted upon.
- We have a number of events aimed at celebrating other cultures and individual lessons focus on different cultures and countries.
- We also recognise national holidays and the special celebrations of different faiths in a variety of ways (such as special food in the canteen, non-uniform days, poster competitions etc.).

#### **e. Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs**

- Discussions about prejudices and prejudice-based bullying in form time.
- Recognition and discussion of religious celebrations in lessons, form times and assemblies.

- Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school e.g. a discussion of fasting during Ramadan.
- Through the PSHE and RE curriculum students are encouraged to discuss and respect differences between people, such as differences of faith, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and differences of family situations.
- RE is taught across the school in every year group and focuses on raising awareness of other faiths as well as challenging misconceptions.
- Links and visits are promoted with local faith communities and places of worship e.g. in RE all GCSE students visit St Paul's Cathedral and the East London Muslim Centre.

## **5. STAFF TRAINING**

- At Walthamstow School for Girls all new staff are made aware of their responsibilities in terms of upholding and promoting British Values during their initial staff training.
- If deemed necessary, staff will be offered the opportunity for further training on upholding the British Values Policy.
- In Year 7 all form tutors deliver a unit on British Values in registration.

## **6. WSFG VALUES**

In all areas of school life our students are expected to accept personal and social responsibility, respecting and upholding the school rules and the rule of law. At WSFG we encourage our students to show a responsibility to each other and the community in the way they behave in school and on their way to and from school.

The list below describes the understanding and knowledge expected of our students as a result of promoting fundamental 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.
- 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.
- An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law.
- 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.
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination.

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