



**First Thought
Independent School**

FIRST THOUGHT CARE SERVICES

British Values Policy

2026-2027

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Statement of Intent

First Thought Independent School supports every pupil to develop the skills, confidence and attitudes that will help them to take part in, and contribute positively to, life in modern Britain.

We recognise that our pupils learn best through meaningful experiences, clear structure, and positive relationships.

We therefore teach and model the **fundamental British values** of:

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

These values are woven throughout the whole school experience – not only in lessons, but through daily routines, play, assemblies, and community experiences. Our approach reflects the individual communication, sensory and emotional needs of each pupil, ensuring that all can understand and experience these values in practical, age-appropriate and engaging ways.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Ofsted (2025) Non-association independent school inspection toolkit
- DfE (2014) 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the British values are upheld throughout the school.
- Holding leaders to account for their performance regarding British values.

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the requirement to uphold British values through the methods outlined in this policy.
- Ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to carry out these methods. Disciplining staff who do not uphold British values, in line with the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

Staff are responsible for:

- Modelling behaviour that respects and adheres to the fundamental British values.
- Ensuring that pupils feel as though their views count and supporting them to develop positive self-esteem.
- Implementing and enforcing this policy and other policies and procedures that reinforce the British values, e.g. the Behaviour Policy.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their lessons are inclusive of, and sensitive to, the fundamental British values.
- Ensuring that teaching methods are designed to bolster pupils' self-esteem and that all pupils are given the opportunity to speak and offer their views.
- Ensuring that lessons discuss, pull examples from and are respectful of a diverse array of cultures.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Treating each other and staff with respect, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Aims and Objectives

Through this policy and our everyday practice, we aim to ensure that our pupils:

- Experience having a voice and making choices, learning that their views and feelings matter.
- Learn that clear rules and routines keep everyone safe and happy.
- Are supported to develop independence, confidence and a sense of personal responsibility.
- Learn that all people are different and that these differences should be accepted, valued and celebrated.
- Are helped to communicate and interact with kindness and respect, developing positive relationships with others.
- Begin to understand fairness, right and wrong, and how to care for themselves and others.
- Learn that discrimination, bullying or unkind behaviour are not acceptable, and are supported to make better choices when difficulties arise.

Democracy

At First Thought Independent School, pupils are supported to understand that their **voices and choices matter**. Communication takes many forms for our pupils, and all are valued equally including spoken language, signs, symbols, gestures, or communication aids. Staff listen carefully and respond to what pupils express, helping them learn that communication brings positive outcomes and change.

Pupils are given regular opportunities to make choices, express preferences, and take part in decisions that affect their school life, for example, choosing activities, sensory resources, or food, and contributing to class or school decisions through accessible pupil voice activities.

Through turn-taking, voting activities (e.g. choosing a story or song), and shared routines, pupils begin to understand that everyone's opinion is important and that groups can decide things together fairly. This helps them experience democracy in action at their level of understanding.

The Rule of Law

Our pupils learn about **safety, fairness and shared expectations** through clear and consistent routines. Staff help pupils understand that rules keep everyone safe and happy.

Rather than focusing on punishment, we use positive behaviour support and restorative approaches so that pupils learn what is expected and why.

Visual prompts, social stories, and class agreements help pupils link rules with real-life consequences for example, why we walk safely, take turns, or use kind hands.

Visits from community helpers such as police officers, fire and ambulance staff help pupils experience that laws and rules also exist in the wider community to protect people and keep them safe.

Through these experiences, pupils begin to understand that actions have consequences and that fairness and consistency help everyone feel secure.

Individual Liberty

Pupils are supported to develop a growing sense of **self-awareness, independence, and personal choice** within a safe and nurturing environment.

We teach pupils to make choices appropriate to their understanding for example, choosing their activities, who they work or play with, or how they express themselves.

Staff help pupils recognise their likes, dislikes and personal preferences and to understand that these are valid and respected.

Through PSHE and RSE, pupils learn about personal boundaries, safety, and consent in ways that are accessible, visual and concrete. They are encouraged to express their feelings and develop confidence in saying "yes" or "no".

By promoting autonomy and self-advocacy, we help pupils understand that they have rights and responsibilities, and

that they can make positive choices in their lives.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance of Those of Different Faiths and Beliefs

The school promotes a culture of **mutual respect**, helping every pupil to understand that all people are valued members of our community. We celebrate similarities and differences in ways that are meaningful for our pupils – through shared experiences, stories, festivals, food, music and play.

We teach pupils that everyone has the right to be treated kindly and fairly, regardless of their background, beliefs, abilities or needs. Staff model respectful communication and help pupils to recognise, name and respond appropriately to their own feelings and those of others.

The Department for Education includes the word *tolerance* within this British value. However, at First Thought Independent School we aim for something deeper and more inclusive than tolerance. **We strive for understanding, acceptance, belonging and genuine inclusion.** Pupils are supported to participate fully in a diverse community where differences are seen as positive and enriching.

Opportunities for learning about and experiencing diversity are carefully planned across the curriculum and through daily routines, assemblies, and celebrations. Staff respond to pupils' individual communication styles and sensory needs to help them engage with these experiences in meaningful ways.

Through this approach, pupils learn that everyone has a place in our school and in society, and that kindness, fairness and respect are values that guide all our actions.

Challenging Views that go Against British Values

The school openly challenges opinions and behaviour, demonstrated by both staff and pupils, that goes against British values.

The school does not tolerate discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour, and any pupils displaying this behaviour will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Referrals regarding pupils that may be at risk of radicalisation will be made in accordance with the school's Prevent Duty Policy.

Staff Training

Members of staff are made aware of their responsibilities in terms of British values during their induction and through additional training.

Staff will be offered the opportunity for further training on upholding the values in this policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the head of education and the governing board.

