

Promoting British Values

The lively and engaged atmosphere at Seaford Primary School is testimony to the strength and humanity of our school ethos which actively promotes the vital principles essential to life in liberal, modern Britain.

The foundations are to be found in **our 6 Golden Rules** which are introduced in the Reception year and displayed in every classroom. They are known and supported by children, staff, parents and governors alike, and through them children learn about **the importance of the rule of law** for maintaining human rights within society. They are linked to our behaviour policy and are referred to in everything we do. Our Golden Rules enshrine **our core values of kindness, honesty, mutual respect and tolerance through listening and understanding, commitment to learning and to making the world a better place.**

Good examples of modelling our Golden Rules are rewarded in many ways including shooting-star certificates and head teacher merits.

During PSHE lessons, circle times and assemblies our children learn about **personal rights and freedoms of the individual** and how to exercise these safely. Subjects such as different family structures, gender and sexual orientation are raised and discussed as well as local issues. These discussions form part of a pervasive entrenchment of **the fundamental principle of mutual respect and tolerance** within the school community. The children are also taught about **their own responsibility to society** and this awareness is applied through activities which involve them in the local community.

For example, our choir regularly performs in homes and clubs for the elderly and our art club have produced a mural for the local railway station to raise awareness about sustainable transport. The school works regularly with Sustrans, the UK charity for sustainable transport, and this has raised children's awareness of environmental and health issues.

Through our democratic forum, the Rainbow Groups, we are about to launch a campaign to promote safer driving practices in the approach to the school gates and to lobby the local council for better recycling provision for the school. The children are looking at ways in which the school can reduce waste in all areas. Our Reception year already compost all their daily fresh fruit peelings and leftovers.

The children are helped to follow through on their concerns for various causes. This school year (2015-16) we have raised money for: Nepal: £87.00, Sport Relief: £410.00, Breast Cancer: £400.00, Cancer Research: £3860, Junior Diabetes: £310.00 and Ecuador: £440

These life principles are also actively taught throughout the curriculum. We take care to embed them in our planning so every opportunity is mined to develop the children's understanding of social, moral, spiritual and cultural complexities and the importance of free speech and mutual respect and tolerance in facing them.

All year groups study key texts which raise important questions in an accessible context. For example, literacy lessons in Year 5 are currently linked to Morris Gleitzman's topical tale about life as a refugee, 'Boy Overboard', and have involved hot debates about the issues involved. Year 4 have discussed the Ancient Athenian experiment in democracy when they studied The Greeks. They have also discussed in depth the stirrings of democratic governance under the Vikings and Saxons and the nature of heroism in the epic, Beowulf. Year 2 have pondered the nature of courage, self-sacrifice and loss in their study of Ernest Shackleton and Year 6 have considered the fight against dictatorship by Hans and Sophie Scholl and Otto and Elise Hampel, amongst other things, in their work on World War 2.

While we actively promote diversity through the celebration of different faiths and cultures, we seek to extend the children's understanding of contemporary beliefs and cultures through discrete RE lessons and where appropriate through embedded planning in the wider curriculum. Recently the whole school celebrated the Hindu and Sikh festival of Diwali and one of our Hindu families conducted an assembly which showed how they would be celebrating at home. The children openly explore the ideas and forms of faith and of the choice to have none.

We are extremely proud of the way our school actively involves the children in democratic processes, preparing them for civic life in adulthood.

The springboard is our Rainbow Groups, which have been described by the children themselves as 'like a parliament' in which 'we can say what we think' and 'can change things if enough of us agree'. They also learn that 'we have to listen to others politely even if we don't agree'.

Through our Rainbow Groups, children help shape the ethos of the school and the rules and regulations which uphold it. This has generated a sense of ownership and respect for **the rule of law** within our micro-community, especially our 6 golden rules.

Rainbow Groups are held fortnightly and **are led by Year 6**. All the children and staff meet in 14 vertically grouped forums. Anything which is to do with school life can be discussed, but there is usually a central issue e.g. How can we ensure that everyone feels safe at Seaford Primary School? which will have been agreed within Rainbow Groups after discussion with children, staff, senior leaders and governors beforehand.

Year 6 will have prepared questions with their teachers to help scaffold discussion and support the younger members of their groups. Year 6 children run the discussions but they also take notes which are collated and posted on the Rainbow Group

display board. The most popular ideas may then be further developed to become part of new policy or school initiatives.

Examples of recent initiatives that were launched in our 'parliament' are a non-bullying campaign spear-headed by peer mediators-Year 6 volunteers trained to help children to sort out their differences amicably, and a healthy lifestyle awareness campaign run by Year 3 lunchtime buddies.

We are in the process of further developing the democratic process by organising for representatives from **the Rainbow Groups to present their decisions and opinions to the governing body** for discussion and response.

These Rainbow Groups partly grew out of **a lively mock election** we held in school, alongside the general election of May 2015. The children were involved in every aspect: as candidates, as campaign organisers, manifesto writers, poster designers, interviewers, ballot box managers, vote counters and, of course, voters. It was a fantastic consciousness-raising exercise borne out by such comments as 'I was going to vote for my friends, but I think I'll wait and hear what they all have to say. It's good it's a secret ballot!'

We are currently planning a referendum to reflect the imminent 'in or out of Europe' ballot, **encouraging the children to engage with current events** on the world stage. As part of this project, we will be inviting local campaigners in to talk to the children. Later this year, Year 5 children will be going on an educational visit to the houses of parliament with our local MP.

At the beginning of this year we launched our Be The Best You Can Be (BTBYCB) campaign. Rowing silver medallist, Alison Mowbray, talked to the whole school about the pathway to achieving your dreams. The children were tremendously inspired and it was a great way to start the year. We are following the BTBYCB programme which involves each child in planning their own pathway to achieving their personal goals. Every year group has a constantly changing display on which the children chart their progress. We have a programme of aspirational speakers who reinforce Alison's message and keep the whole school motivated.

Children learn the importance of behavioural patterns such as trying out new things, putting the time in, believing in themselves, making sacrifices, perseverance and team spirit. For example, we have had local business woman and children's author, Julian Warrender and former international tennis player, Luke Milligan. Staff too have been enthused by this project!

We also invited World War 2 veteran, Peter Gadsdon OBE, MC, to address the children on Poppy Day about the stark realities of war and the importance of actively working for peace. The children wrote letters demonstrating that they had been profoundly moved by this, expressing an understanding that they owed much to Peter and his generation.

A broad and creative curriculum is a key tenet of our philosophy at Seaford Primary School. We are aware that, with eyes so often on literacy and numeracy, other vital areas of children's learning experiences, such as art and music, can be under-represented. As well as ensuring that these subjects are included in planning, especially in learning adventures (for example, Year 1 children study a variety of musical and artistic traditions when they do their 'Where in the world is Barnaby Bear?' learning adventure, as well as gaining a good grasp of the world map from different angles!) we aim always to prick the children's interest in and understanding of the wider world and they also enjoy exploring nature in our wonderful grounds, with the help of our (almost) resident, biodynamic gardener, Rose Gauntlett and Gardening Club leader, Martin Bulger.

The children's own enthusiasm for learning is borne out by the many clubs that they attend and, in many cases, run themselves. Sport is an essential element in the life of Seaford Primary School. Mindful of the importance of exercise as a satisfying component of the well-lived life we ensure that our PE and dance lessons are fun and inclusive as well as challenging. We do give opportunities to those whose spirits are ignited by a taste of 'triumph and disaster' to compete, for example, with sporting fixtures with other local schools.

At Seaford Primary School we are all forever looking for new ways to inspire and develop the children. While we know it is impossible to provide all that we would wish at any one time, we are wholly committed to empowering the children to be the best they can be within the solid, nurturing framework set clearly by the school, of democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect and tolerance and freedom of the individual.

Deborah Slot

SMSC leader

May 2016