

Red Oaks Primary School

Quality Mark Visit

Monday 16th May 2016



Values-based Education
IVET Quality Mark

Neil Balliston

Red Oaks Primary School

Introduction

Red Oaks Primary School is a Quality Mark school and this visit is to conduct an audit to evaluate the progress it has made and renew the Quality Mark status. The school is a very happy place to learn and work and this was immediately evident on arrival as the office staff are extremely welcoming and friendly. Rachel Surch (Headteacher) is in her third year as a Headteacher and is the lead VbE person to ensure it underpins everything the school does. She is passionate about VbE and embraces every aspect of it and this is mirrored by all of her staff. The whole school community embraces all aspects of VbE and the children express themselves confidently and their behaviour reflects the school's values.

What is VbE?

Values-based Education underpins the life and work of school communities, colleges, and other settings, including the home so that they are values-based. The term values-based implies that every aspect of life, both personal and professional is based on the way that values are lived. It is transformational, in that it invites cultural change that is based on equity and respect for all. It is challenging, as it calls us to ask what we can give to life, as opposed to what can we get from life? It promotes a way of being that values the self, others and the environment. It is simple: yet profound in its effects. It is a developmental process that connects with the intrinsic qualities of human beings and actively nurtures them. It invites the individual to be aware of the potential power of their inner world of thoughts and feelings; how the way that these are used affects our own well being, that of others and potentially the world. It sees the purpose of education as the flourishing of humanity. It is soundly based on research, which shows the positive effects on pupils, both socially and academically, when educators model and teach about universal, positive human values. The purpose of adopting VbE is to inspire young people to adopt positive values in their lives so that they can be the best people that they can be and actively demonstrate the values in their daily lives, thereby helping to create a sustainable world.

Terminology

Values-based Education occurs when universal, positive human values underpin everything a school or other organisation does.

Values Education is any activity, which promotes the understanding of positive values, developing the skills and dispositions of adults and pupils so they can live the values as active members of the community.

Values are the principles, fundamental convictions and standards that act as the general guides to our thinking and behaviour. They include: Peace, Justice, Respect, Love, Patience, Happiness, Caring, Trust, Honesty, Humility, Courage, Compassion, Tolerance and Hope.

Positive character traits are seen in pupils as the outcome of VbE.

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1. A whole school strategy to support Values-based Education	
Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils, staff, parents and governors have selected the school's values. • In English schools, requirements about British values and the development of character and learning behaviours are incorporated. • Time is allocated within the curriculum for their consideration and the approach is incorporated into assemblies and lessons. • Values underpin the ethos and work of the school. • The school has a clear, shared policy for Values-based Education and the essence of Values is reflected in school policy, and mission statements. • Staff training for using the resources for Values has taken place. • Values-based Education is an integral part of the School Improvement Plan. • Staff and pupils are positive ambassadors for Values-based Education. • The work to develop Values is reviewed regularly, including the views of pupils and parents. • The school's climate for learning is happy, calm and purposeful; one that promotes quality teaching and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of staff meetings • Minutes of Governor meetings • Records of CPD • School Improvement Plan • OFSTED Report • SIAMS Report • Displays of children's work • Reward/award systems / certificates • Interviews with staff, pupils, governors and parents • Staff, parent and pupil questionnaires • Values Policy – Values and Behaviour Policy (Linked to British Values) • Photographs
Neil's comments	
<p>Our mission statement: 'An open door to an inspirational learning journey.'</p> <p>Everything I discussed with Rachel, her staff, governors and pupils reflected their mission statement. The school has a very detailed SMSC policy which is very clear and highlights the school's values and vision. The school operates a 22 Value cycle and to avoid any repetition they are linked to current affairs. It has very clear definitions, clear aims and identifies what each child should have throughout their time at Red Oaks. The subject appendix shows how SMSC and values can be weaved into individual subjects.</p> <p>The school has several Curriculum Teams and one of these is the Wellbeing Team. Their remit includes SEND, Inclusion, SMSC, PSHE, P4C. There are six members of staff in this team and they devise an annual Action Plan that covers the subjects detailed above and this is linked to their Performance Management. This is reviewed three times a year by the team and then fed into governors. This is separate to the whole School Development Plan.</p> <p>British Values have been covered in staff meetings and are currently the focus for this term.</p> <p>To ensure all staff understand and follow the VbE philosophy there is a thorough staff induction programme which includes VbE. To ensure continuity across the community there is a workshop for new parents and an introduction to VbE every June.</p>	

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All pupil behaviours are linked back to the values or one of the learning skills in BLP (Building Learning Power).

The school's website is very informative as it has examples of every value covered since 2009 and staff and the community can draw on this for ideas to develop. This is an excellent resource. On the school's website is a 'Thank you' board for the community to use and a 'Wall of Talent' for activities and successes out of school which can be updated by parents with their children.

Similar to a School Council, Red Oaks have the 'Helping Hands' which consists of two pupils from each class from Y2 upwards. One is nominated by the teacher and the other one elected. They have frequent meetings and their suggestions are fed back to whole school in assembly. Other responsibilities they carry out are interviewing new teachers and conducting tours for visitors. They also manage 'Kiss and Drop' in the school car park each morning. They keep minutes of each meeting to provide evidence and this feeds into their own School Improvement Plan in which the big focus this year is reading. To ensure their voice is heard they have their own SEF and the school's chair of governors recently conducted pupil interviews on VbE.

All pupils and staff that I met during the day were such positive ambassadors for VbE and the pupils were so passionate about the values; fully understood their meanings; the impact they have had in school and how they need to use them daily in every aspect of their life.

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2. The quality of provision including teaching and learning practices and the “Values” curriculum, both explicit and embedded.

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development through values is purposely planned for in each daily assembly. • Values are explicitly and implicitly taught and referenced across the curriculum. • Values-based Education demonstrably supports and scaffolds the curriculum for PSHE, SMSC and relationships education, and the development of character and learning behaviours. • Pupils are actively encouraged to grapple with ‘big’ philosophical questions. They use a wide ethical vocabulary confidently • All staff are positive role models for Values approaches and positive social and emotional skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with staff, pupils, governors and parents • Curriculum plans • Staff, parent and pupil questionnaires • Collective Worship/Assembly plans
<p>Neil’s Comments</p> <p>The values are displayed internally and externally and are explicit around the school, in addition to this, the children implicitly understand them and model them around the school in lessons and at lunchtimes.</p> <p>There is a formal PSHE lesson once a week which invariably includes circle time, practical activities, video clips and discussion. The school uses the Jigsaw PSHE scheme and I believe this enhances the VbE ethos established in school. Lots of Values Education work is done incidentally and this is because it is so well embedded.</p> <p>I thoroughly enjoyed Rachel’s whole school assembly. The children arrived in silence and enjoyed listening to the music and the calmness generated by everyone else. The Specialist Music teacher led an upbeat whole school song about people who help us and the children; this was the perfect start. Rachel shared a story with the children and then encouraged the whole school to discuss it. This was done so well and the children were brought back together with a huge strike of the gong! I also liked the way she differentiated the questions for the children and then the assembly was completed with the very moving Derek Redmond video clip. The children left the school hall in a silent and reflective manner. This was a model assembly, thank you! In my opinion, this assembly underpinned everything the school believes in.</p> <p>All assemblies are carefully planned to give a good breadth of values, religions and throughout the year there are a good range of key community visitors.</p> <p>All staff are good role models and the Headteacher consistently sees and hears positive role modelling. The two lessons and the meeting with the Helping Hands group and their teacher demonstrated what good role models the staff are in the way they speak with the children and respect them.</p> <p>The school has a Learning and Behaviour Charter which explains the red and green zone behaviours, highlights behaviour expectations and places a huge emphasis on Tribal behaviour. Children are expected to model green zone behaviour. Examples of this would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including everyone in the Red Oaks tribe 	

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- Showing compassion to each other

When the children slip into red zone behaviour they are reminded of green zone behaviour and this conversation is modelled by staff across the school.

The school's curriculum has great breadth and at the centre of it is Enquiry based Learning. The children have a stimulus at the start of a topic and then come up with questions and the teacher will plan these into the topic. Geography, History, Art and DT are linked and form a topic, whereas other subjects are taught discretely. The children also enjoy a Black History month and a Multi-cultural week.

The school currently holds the Arts Mark Gold. They hope to achieve the Platinum Mark and would be the first school in Swindon to do so.

The school offers a huge range of after school clubs; some of these are run by outside agencies and others are run by staff.

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3. The attitudes and practices of staff, their personal development and well being.	
Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are positive role models for Values. They are supportive of each other and the pupils. • Staff morale is high and there is an emphasis on the caring for self and others. There is a constant striving to raise and maintain the self esteem of all staff. • Professional development in terms of Values-based Education is as integral to staff and pupil entitlement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with staff and pupils • Staff, parent and pupil questionnaires • Feedback from governor monitoring • Comments/letters from visitors to the school • OFSTED/SIAMS report
Neil's Comments	
<p>The Ofsted Report in 2013 specifically commented on the school's values, the role modelling and the impact SMSC has across the school. The uncertainty in education, the current climate around education and a lack of direction have affected morale but the school's emphasis on staff wellbeing has left staff feeling supported. Below are some examples of how they support staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga Teacher (Staff INSET) • Nutritionist (Staff INSET) • Importance of Sleep – this was led by a well informed member of staff • Staff have an extra day per term for assessment • Staff also have an extra morning per term for planning and organising trips and they are released as a team • Coordinator Time when possible • CPD is linked to the SIP, personal identification and Curriculum Teams. When staff have attended a course there is a central collection for course evaluations. <p>The Leadership Team is constantly aware of incidental comments and they always take opportunities to praise, support and guide staff. Cover is always provided so staff can see their own children's performances. We also discussed how the following initiatives support the staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care First – employee assist • Pizza for staff on parents' evening • Snacks/ sweets provided for twi-lights • Staff visited other schools abroad to broaden their educational experience – South Africa, France and Zimbabwe • Staff recovery time after residential or late night concerts • Progress Meetings always start with positives <p>In September 2017 the staff will participate in P4C training. This is further evidence of how Rachel and her team are</p>	

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always looking to develop VbE and SMSC so children have maximum opportunities to develop holistically.

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4. The behaviours of pupils, their personal development and well being.	
Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values-based Education underpins the school's behaviour and related policies, expectations and practice. • Values-based Education demonstrably informs the development of character, learning behaviours and emotional and mental health. • Pupils show a high degree of personal autonomy and can talk cogently about their feelings and emotions. • Pupils are able to experience reflection and discuss its impact for them. • The school environment and ethos reflects the above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and related policies. • Pupil and Parent questionnaires and feedback. • Lesson observations. • Pupil testimony
Neil's Comments	
<p>Red Oaks has a very skilled workforce and they are supported by many outside agencies, therefore enabling the school to provide a rich, targeted and varied SMSC curriculum. The TaMHS team, which work at the school, produced a stunning and complimentary letter that endorses all the work they do. In the addition to this the school also runs many workshops and initiatives for their staff, pupils and parents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flourishing Together Programme – a programme that shows how to think clearly; how to have great relationships, how to take healthy control of your life and how to guide yourself and others towards a more fulfilling life. This has had a really positive impact across the school. The school has received letters from parents thanking them for the impact the programme has had. 2. There is a very structured transition process for all children. 3. Children's anti-bullying policy written by the children 4. Profile of House point system has been raised significantly and the children are motivated by this. <p>The behaviour across the school was very impressive. I had a tour with members of the Helping Hand committee and they are so proud of their school and had great delight in discussing the values; the role they play in school; showing me the playground and classrooms and the very many colourful and eye catching displays. All classes that we visited were busy working and the ethos was calm and purposeful.</p> <p>Lunchtime was one of the best I have witnessed. The children had so many activities to participate in. The children were given the freedom to play games of their choice; role play was happening in the play houses and the older children were able to play sports, read and enjoy eating their lunch with their peers. Not one child was inactive!</p> <p>I met with one of the governors who was captivated by the behaviour, self control and discipline of children in assembly.</p> <p>One of the biggest factors to why children develop holistically at Red Oaks is because they are listened to. Their thoughts and suggestions are acted upon and the children feel part of the school and this was evident in the meeting that I had with them. One child described how her favourite value is Unity as it keeps the school going and everyone talks to each other if there is a problem. Another child commented that lots of people across the school model the values and that you see lots of kindness in the classroom. The children also liked the potential of having Values</p>	

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Ambassadors who would have the responsibility of observing and praising values behaviours. A girl in year 6 added to the discussion by suggesting that it would be good to have a new value to study and the children could go away and research it.

I observed two lessons and thoroughly enjoyed both. I observed Becky, who is the Pastoral Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead, take a Social Skills group with five pupils. She works in a room dedicated to SMSC and there are many motivational posters and helpful tips for the children. They were discussing how to remain a good friend and the children were guided in this session using "Before you speak – THINK":

T = True

H = Helpful

I = Inspiring

N = Necessary

K = Kind

I also observed a Year 3 lesson where the children watched an excellent clip that focused on kindness and being helpful. All the children in the class were fully engaged, there was much partner talk and the children were very good at describing the video and how it made them feel. The teacher also added to their ethical vocabulary with his explanations.

The children are given a fantastic start at Red Oaks.

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5. The physical, aesthetic and communal environment.	
Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole school commitment to Values-based Education is shown through the school prospectus, newsletters and website. • The school's commitment to these principles are reflected in all areas of the school's life. Values are reflected in the outdoor as well as indoor school environment. • Displays and work show that learning through Values-based Education is planned around key questions or concepts that deepen and broaden pupil knowledge and understanding. • The school environment reflects a calm focus and also radiates joy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays • Photographs • Website • DVDs • Prospectus • Newsletters
Neil's Comments	
<p>On arrival, I noticed many mosaics that displayed the school values and these were super as immediately I knew what the school's priorities were before I had set foot in the school. The main entrance has a wonderful wooden sculpture that is surrounded by other unique artwork, the House Captains and points tally, as well as other pictures which show the value for the term.</p> <p>The corridors are attractive with displays of a very high quality. All the different groups are displayed so the children are aware of what is going on. These include the Charity Group, the Helping Hands and the House Captains.</p> <p>I really like the outside environment as there is so much for the children to enjoy. There are playhouses, climbing apparatus, mud kitchens, tennis courts, stages to perform on, a friendship stop (this was empty) and many other resources. There are two football pitches and the most delightful pond and wildlife area. The children can use this under supervision but the pond and story area were fabulous. The school has certainly made the most of its grounds. The values mosaics are also displayed in the playground; an excellent point of reference for Lunchtime Supervisors when potentially correcting behaviour that has slipped into red.</p> <p>The newsletter is a valued resource for the parents. An April newsletter shared the termly value and also shared the results of the parent survey regarding values. Below are some responses:</p> <p>99.5% of parents believe the staff are positive role models for their children</p> <p>Nearly 99% of parents believe that the school has a calm and purposeful environment.</p> <p>The school prospectus is very detailed and highlights the huge impact VbE has within their school.</p>	

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6. The involvement and support of parents and the community	
Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/carers have been consulted about what they would like the school to offer through the Values approach. • Home-school agreements, newsletters, the school website support the promotion of values-based social and emotional skills through activities at home. • The school provides a range of opportunities to support parents. This may include family values courses. • Views of relevant stakeholders inform planning when developing Values approaches and contacts with external agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from parental questionnaires • Evidence of family learning activities • Parent interviews • Minutes of meetings with parent forums/task groups • Newsletters • Website • Details of Values-based events • Weekly planning • Home/school policy • Home-school agreement and parent and child responses • Minutes from meetings of governing body, multi-professionals etc.
Neil's Comments	
<p>The school is very open and is keen to understand all stakeholders' opinions. Parents and pupils are frequently interviewed and these results are fed back and then used to inform future planning. The recent values survey completed by parents was overwhelmingly positive and reflected the excellent work at Red Oaks.</p> <p>The school really values parental input and below are some of the ways they achieve this and in turn enable parents to feel valued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome BBQ for new parents • Welcome meeting for all classes in September • Refreshments provided at parents' evening – governor presence • E-safety information evening • Parent consultation on new homework policy • Family learning opportunities on a Saturday – Family African drumming/ drama/ junk modelling • Science & DT family challenges • Family picnic after sports day • Breakfast meeting for parents after they have dropped their children school 	

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- Family Talent Show
- Staff pantomime
- Flourishing Together
- Christmas Carol Concert and family fireworks.
- Rachel is on the school gate to meet and greet parents

In addition to this, the school frequently sends home photocopied work so the parents can share their child's successes with them. Postcards are sent home for positive behaviour and each child throughout the year will be a 'Special Person'; this is where every member of their class writes something positive about them and this is sent home too.

The school has many links with outside agencies and these have been formed to ensure parents and pupils feel supported and they receive the appropriate guidance.

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7. The over-arching focus on pupil achievement, defined in terms of: Academic, Affective, Moral and Spiritual

Criteria	Possible Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence (both qualitative and quantitative data) is used to determine the impact that Values-based Education is having on learning, behaviour and attendance in school. Children are encouraged to make the link between their social and emotional skills and other learning. Parents are also involved in helping their children in identified areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays Photographs Website DVDs Prospectus Newsletters Feedback from parental and pupil questionnaires Evidence of family learning activities Parent interviews Minutes of meetings with parent forums/task groups Newsletters Details of Values-based events Weekly planning Home/school policy Home-school agreement and parent and child responses Celebration assemblies Displays of children's work Certificates Individual challenge plans, IEPs and IBPs

Neil's Comments

The school is completely focused to support every child to achieve their full potential both holistically and academically.

The Headteacher, staff, governors and pupils speak passionately about Values; the Helping Hands committee commented on how they help them in their learning and also with their behaviour.

Every aspect of the school is a testament to the hard work and commitment of all stakeholders to Values-based Education.

Recommended next steps:

1. Display values in the hall as discussed during the audit
2. Consider having Values Ambassadors (I will forward details of stickers)
3. Provide links to other websites such as VbE, P4C, Mindfulness etc.
4. Provide further opportunities for children to reflect in their classrooms, this was also flagged by the Helping Hands
5. Display the termly value in each classroom and other key locations around the school
6. Consider asking the Helping Hands to canvas pupils for a new value

I recommend that Red Oaks Primary School have their Values Quality Mark renewed for another three years. This is a fantastic school where the child's self-esteem, social and emotional development is seen as a priority and is developed within a fun, well taught framework. It has a wonderful environment with happy children and staff.

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Congratulations on the fantastic work you are doing.