

Case Study

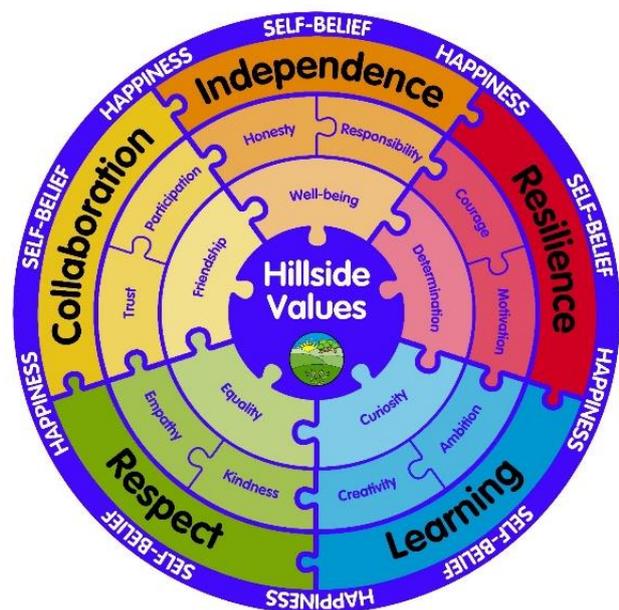
Hillside Primary School
Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire RG6 4HQ
United Kingdom
www.hillside.wokingham.sch.uk

Hillside Primary is a two-form entry school in Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire. We have 464 pupils on role. We also have a 26-space nursery attached to the school. We are a community school and have a range of ethnicities, a diverse community and value each person as an individual.

We began our Values-based Education journey in September 2016.

At the beginning of our journey we had 6 core values – Respect, Resilience, Collaboration, Independence, Learning and Happiness. Our motif design is jigsaw pieces which fit together to create a circle. Since our Quality Mark Award in 2018, we have developed our values from our initial 6 to 22.

Each month we focus on a new value. Each value is linked to our initial core values, hence the colours and design of our Values Wheel. We hope to develop children's ethical language through extending the number of values at Hillside.



Our values initially helped the school community to come together and build relationships and they helped enhance learning behaviours and build resilience to take on challenges in learning and life.

As the school community began to embrace the values and live the values many other changes have taken place. Parents often tell us their child shows the values at home, a monthly newsletter goes home celebrating the work we have been doing in school and highlighting the next value of focus, so parents can live our values too.

Curriculum planning is closely linked to our values and discussed in lessons and each room has a display for children to use to help their learning and celebrate our Hillside values. We have specially chosen books for study which have strong links to our values, and we share this booklist with parents.

We have Values essentials which all staff know about and ensure the essentials are happening each day. These include a Monday assembly on the first week of the new value; all staff attend assembly and DH / HT will introduce the new value to everyone. During this assembly Head boy and girl will move the arrow on the values wheel to point to new value.

Assembly music will be played as the children enter and leave the hall; this music will be from a particular genre. In singing assemblies, the children will learn to sing songs with a values theme, linked to the value of that month.

Highlighting on planning when the lessons are values driven, we ensure current affairs are brought into the classroom and discussed. We use the Jigsaw PSHE scheme.

Check-ins and morning rituals take place daily to ensure children are coming into school feeling happy and safe.

We have seen a difference to children's behaviours, they are growing in confidence to challenge themselves, they are becoming good global citizens – showing care and concern for others. Values-based Education really does work!

Following my attendance at the Values-based Education International Conference in October 2019, I was inspired to develop our values-based approach further by focusing on building relationships, environments, affirmations and legacy.

I hosted a staff INSET in January 2020 and shared my vision for our next steps. This highlighted to myself and SLT in school that staff and pupil wellbeing and mental health awareness was our next priority. We are developing a support team within school, we are ensuring we are thinking about workload; we have encouraged social gatherings each Friday straight after school to catch up with each other, a buddy system for sharing and caring for one another and each staff INSET at the end of a term is to be a social (quiz, visit to the local café, a visitor/ speaker). Already we are building an even stronger school community, we share and delight in each other's successes and support each other in times of need. I have encouraged people to use affirmations – telling themselves, and us telling each other, the positives we do each day for ourselves and others.

It was through speeches I listened to at the VbEI Conference, the reading of Neil Hawkes' books and The Peaceful School book, that I became so passionate about building authentic relationships and resilience and how caring about ourselves first can help us support and care for others. I totally believe that Values-based Education should be at the heart of every school community.

It is a way of life.