

Flags, Immigration and Free Speech

Community Response Lesson

Rules for the Room

PSHE ground rules

What rules did you decide as a group?

Check the rules again in your book and make sure you keep them in mind when working in today's PSHE lesson.



PARKSIDE VALUES

WHO WE ARE



Recall

TASK: From memory, and without discussion, can you recall the school values?

What about the Embark Values?

EMBARK VALUES

WHO WE ARE



Aims and Objectives



Explain why there is a debate surrounding immigration in the UK.



Describe the difference between free speech and hate speech.

Key Terms

Patriotism : the feeling of love, devotion, and loyalty a person has toward their country. It often includes pride in the nation's achievements, as well as a sense of responsibility to contribute positively.

Nationalism: this is when you believe your country is superior to others. This is generally a far-right sentiment.

Far-right: A way of thinking about politics where people want very strict rules, don't like big changes, and often want to put their own country or group of people above others.

Reminder

We're going to discuss some important themes today, which we may have differing opinions on.

Some of us may have strong opinions – but strong opinions don't make us right, and we must recognise others may have different strong opinions too!

In today's lesson we're learning about the importance of shared British Values. With that in mind, let's just remind ourselves of our learning success protocol.

We don't laugh – there are no 'silly' questions.

We know that everyone is different, and everyone is valued.

We know that just because it hasn't happened to us, it doesn't mean it doesn't happen.

We know that there are different viewpoints, and we are respectful of them

We can always ask a question privately if we wish to.

We show respect to all students and staff

We don't judge

We listen carefully

Flags, immigration and free speech

Throughout the summer of 2025, some of the UK's different flags started to be put up by the public, all over the country. Some people supported the movement and thought a bit of patriotism was great to see – but others were left asking important questions.

In some councils, the flags were taken down. In others, the flags were left up.

Discuss: What have you heard about this and have you seen many new flags?



Flags, immigration and free speech



This summer, we marked VJ Day (celebrating the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II) and the Lionesses' huge football victory, so it wasn't that surprising to see some extra flags waving around Britain. However, the increase in flags in public areas was far more than was expected. The timing also coincided with local protests against the government using hotels to house people who had arrived in the UK illegally in order to claim asylum. Today we'll investigate the debate surrounding immigration and how it links to you seeing more flags around

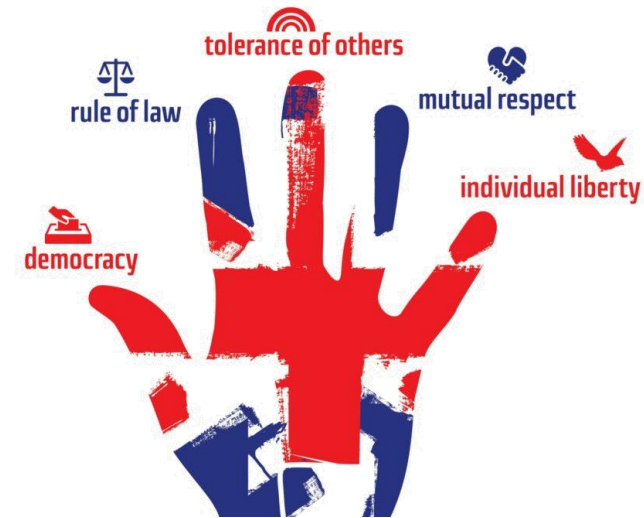
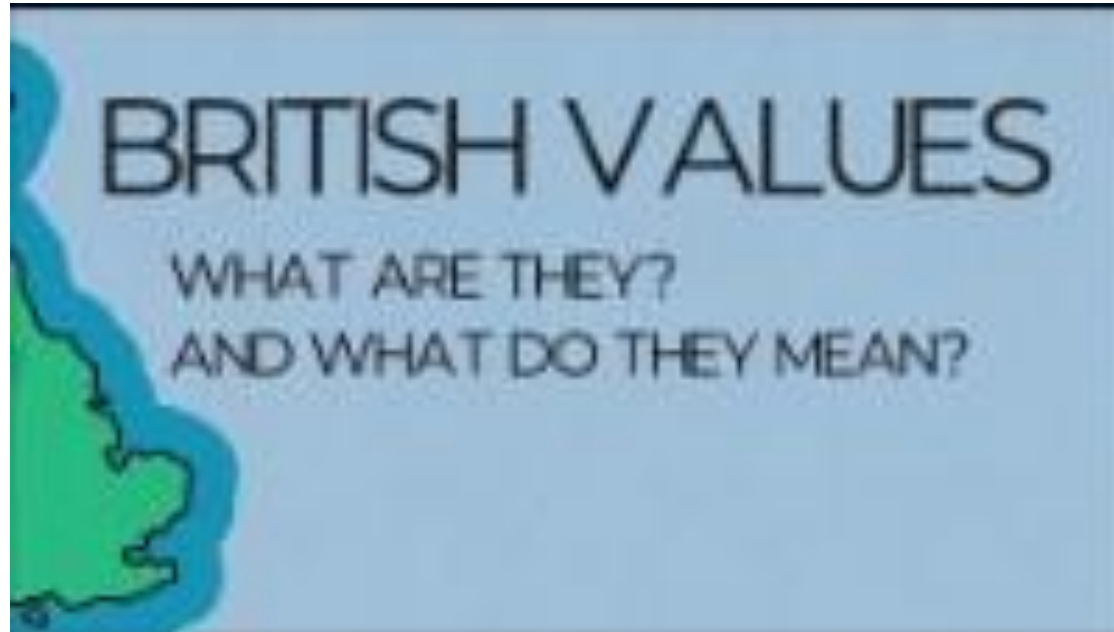


Watch: Watch the Newsround clip for a brief summary of events



British Values

Before we go any further, let's remind ourselves about our the fundamental British values



Patriotism vs Nationalism

It's important as we delve further into this subject that we know the distinction between patriotism and nationalism. Anyone can be patriotic, but it tends to be people on the far right of the political spectrum who are nationalistic.

TASK 1: Read the statements.

Can you correctly identify which statements are examples of patriotism, and which are examples of Nationalism?

A. I'm putting up the St George's Cross everywhere so immigrants can see white people are in charge around here!

B. I love flying the Scottish flag whenever we win at any sport – which isn't all that often unfortunately!

C. People should only be allowed to stay in Britain if they can trace their ancestry back 5 generations – to the purest and best British people.


D. Wales is just better than England. Our people are better, our beaches are better, our language is better. No English should be allowed to move here.

E.. England was for most of its history, only white people. That's what makes it better than many other countries.

F. Our Union Jack reminds me of victory over the Nazis, Britpop, the NHS and our amazing sports teams!

G. Our flags are for British people of all colours and all faiths. They are a symbol of pride and unity in our country.

H. I'm putting up the St George's Cross because my parents escaped persecution abroad – now I'm proud to say I'm English and we're free.



Patriotism: The feeling of love, devotion, and loyalty a person has toward their country. It often includes pride in the nation's achievements, as well as a sense of responsibility to contribute positively.

Nationalism: This is when you believe your country is superior to others. This is generally a far-right sentiment.



Patriotism vs Nationalism

TASK: Check your answers and correct any mistakes.

Patriotism

B. I love flying the Scottish flag whenever we win at any sport – which isn't all that often unfortunately!

F. Our Union Jack reminds me of victory over the Nazis, Britpop, the NHS and our amazing sports teams!

G. Our flags are for British people of all colours and all faiths. They are a symbol of pride and unity in our country.

H. I'm putting up the St George's Cross because my parents escaped persecution abroad – now I'm proud to say I'm English and we're free.

Nationalism

A. I'm putting up the St George's Cross everywhere so immigrants can see white people are in charge around here!

C. People should only be allowed to stay in Britain if they can trace their ancestry back 5 generations – to the purest and best British people.

D. Wales is just better than England. Our people are better, our beaches are better, our language is better. No English should be allowed to move here.

E.. England was for most of its history, only white people. That's what makes it better than many other countries.

Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?

TASK 2: We will now read about what's going on in the UK right now regarding the migrant hotel protests, the increase in flags and the free speech debate.



Read, listen and consider the information carefully.

Remember to be respectful in your response.

Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?

Immigration is a big topic in the UK right now.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of people who come to the UK from other countries. Many come to work or study in the UK, while some, around 6-10% are asylum seekers. These are people escaping war, danger or unfair treatment. They are vulnerable and seeking a safe place to live, something which is their right under the universal declaration of Human Rights.

Some people think the UK should help these newcomers. They say migrants work hard and help in hospitals and care homes, doing jobs that others don't want.

But others are worried. They say there aren't enough houses, school places, or NHS services. They claim that most of the people arriving illegally in 2024 were young men, not families. In fact, in the year to March 2025, only 59% were men.

The UK government has spent £8-12 billion on housing them since 2020, while some British people are still homeless or struggling. This has made immigration a very emotional issue.



Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?

Why are hotels part of the debate?

While asylum seekers wait to find out if they can stay in the UK, many are placed in hotels. They are not able to work, and are supported by the government. Some local people are upset about this. They say it's unfair when housing is already limited and British people are losing benefits. Others say asylum seekers need safe places to stay and should be treated kindly.

Why are people protesting?

Some protests started after reports of sexual assault by a few asylum seekers in hotels. This made people worry about safety. In places like Epping and Canary Wharf, groups of mums called the 'pink ladies' protested to protect their children. They were worried because they didn't know the backgrounds of the new men in their area. Some feared that these men might be escaping crimes in their own countries, and that they might have different views about women than people in the UK.

Most people understand both sides – they feel sorry for the asylum seekers but also worry about safety. A range of groups went and protested outside the hotels. These groups hold a variety of views, and we shouldn't generalise that all people on either side of the debate all agree. However, some extreme groups joined the protests. Some far-left groups wanting open borders, and some far-right groups who want all migrants removed. Police had trouble keeping them apart, and there were fights and arrests.



Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?

What happened in Epping?

The people of Epping won a court case to move asylum seekers out of their local hotel. The government said it would challenge the decision, but now other councils might try to do the same. The government appealed and courts decision was overturned, meaning the asylum seekers could stay, for now.



How is social media involved?

Social media made things worse. People shared strong opinions, false information, and even hate speech. This made the arguments more heated. We must be very careful of what we read on social media, and try and check the facts where we can, especially before we act on what we see.

Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?

Free Speech vs Hate Speech – what's the difference?

Free speech means you can share your opinions.

In the UK, you're allowed to speak your mind, even if others don't agree. You can talk about immigration, politics, or your identity.

But hate speech is not allowed.

Hate speech is when someone uses words to attack or spread hate against others because of their race, religion, gender, or sexuality. Hate speech can lead to police action or even jail.

The difference is this:

- If you're criticising an idea, that's free speech.
- If you're attacking people for who they are, that's hate speech



Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?

Why are people putting up flags? Should we care?

Some people are putting up flags to show pride in their country – not just for football or special days. They also want to show that they care about British identity.

Since 2020, over 4.5 million migrants have come to the UK. Again, many people came legally to work, or to escape persecution. However, a larger number of migrants have led to some British people worrying that the country is changing too fast. Many people are genuinely afraid of the country losing its identity. That's why schools teach British Values – like respect, peace, and fairness – to help everyone get along, no matter their background.

It's easy to laugh at these fears, but history shows us they matter. When people feel ignored or divided, problems can grow

It's important to take people's worries seriously.

Even if some fears seem silly or extreme, history shows us that when people feel left out or ignored, problems can grow. That's why things like integration (getting to know each other, sharing values, and learning the same language) really matter.



Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?

Let's look at an example from history – Yugoslavia in the 1980s and the impact of nationalism

Yugoslavia was one country made up of many different groups – Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks (Muslims), Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and others.

The government tried to keep everyone united by ignoring differences. But underneath, some groups felt their culture and language weren't respected. Others thought some areas got more money or power than they should.



When the economy got worse, tensions grew. Leaders started using national pride – like waving flags and singing old songs – to get support. People began asking who really “belonged” in the country. Neighbours who had lived peacefully together started seeing each other as enemies.

Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?



By the 1990s, Yugoslavia broke apart.

Slovenia and Croatia became independent, and fighting started. In Bosnia, things got very bad. People were divided by religion and ethnicity. There were violent clashes, people were forced to leave their homes, and some groups were targeted just for who they were. Flags and language became tools to separate people into “us” and “them.”

Britain is very different from Yugoslavia.

The UK has a strong democracy, fair laws, and a long history of free speech and individual rights. People can vote, protest peacefully, and speak up when they disagree.

We also have shared values – like tolerance, respect and fairness. These values help bring people together and solve problems through discussion, not violence. But to keep this working, we all need to help new arrivals settle in. That’s not just their job – it’s also the job of the government and our communities.

Immigration, Free Speech, Flags and Hotels in the UK – what is going on?



So what about flags?

Some people think flying the British flag is a way to show pride in the country. Others worry it might be seen as unfriendly or political.

But maybe we should ask:

Should flying the flag be seen as a bad thing? Or should everyone – no matter their race, religion or background – feel proud to fly it?

It's a good question. But one thing is true:

The flag belongs to all of us



Free Speech or Hate Speech?

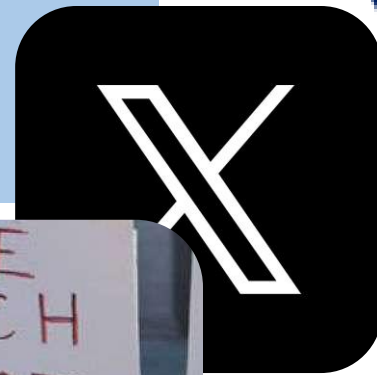
TASK 3: We're now going to look at arguments from six people, from a range of backgrounds, in the UK.

All six are based on real people and real X (Twitter) posts. These have been altered to protect anonymity, but it's important we use case studies as close to the originals as possible so you can see how near some people are to breaking hate speech laws – or even actually breaking them without perhaps realising.

Read the statements, and decide, are the people using free speech or could it be hate speech?

Remember

- If you're criticising an idea, that's free speech.
- If you're attacking people for who they are, that's hate speech



Free Speech or Hate Speech?



Chris

I don't think people understand why we're flying more flags. You're right – it's not just about celebrating the football. Come on – let's be honest, we all know it's not about

May in future be seen in law as containing hate speech, but not yet.

This could actually be construed as hate speech under possible new Islamophobia laws being developed. However – not yet. Sharia is an idea; Muslims are the particular people. You can criticise ideas.

Balkans. Or we can decide that actually, we DO have a culture, we DO have shared symbols, and it starts with a flag.

Think/Pair/Share: Are these examples of free speech or hate speech?

Ha! Ok well I only give rulings under British law – you know – I married in countries that always have. My husband speaks perfect English – many migrants are arriving from countries that teach English in their schools already!

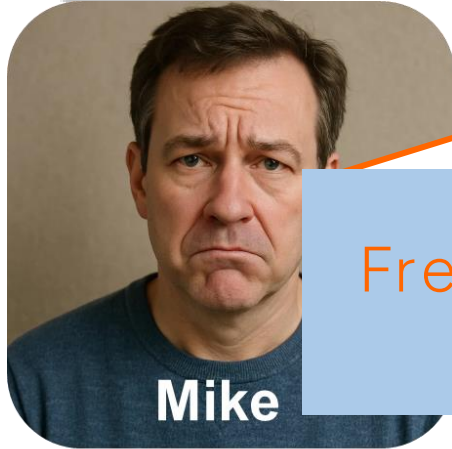
Free speech

Nothing here falls under hate speech. She is expressing ideas and opinions, not criticising any particular groups.



Sara

Free Speech or Hate Speech?



Mike

Free speech

Look, I'm no racist, my wife's Jamaican, my mate's from Pakistan – but even they're agreeing with me. I think we've all just had it, haven't we? We know we're going to be a

Nothing here falls under hate speech. He is expressing ideas and opinions, not hate speech towards any particular groups.

at this point I just want a general election

Think/Pair/Share: Are these examples of free speech or hate speech?

Typical thick white male. My family were Catholic Irish immigrants – and success what? We suffered prejudice and had to live in slums. Give people a choice now it is multiculturalism, integration and law without us to a peaceful future. I mean, look at the birth rate – we do need more people in the UK. So stupid.

May be seen in law as containing hate speech.

This could actually be construed as criticising a particular group – white males.



Emily

Free Speech or Hate Speech?



Gurjit

My family had to scrimp and save to settle in England in the 70s. We weren't given benefits or hosted in hotels. We worked hard – faced racism and won people over,

May be seen in law as containing hate speech.

The phrase 'parasitical' is one which de-humanises a group, in this case migrants.

happy about it – and honestly, that's what I'm seeing nowadays. None of these new migrants seem to want to integrate. It's parasitical.

Think/Pair/Share: Are these examples of free speech or hate speech?

So how is demonising people helping? Would you want to integrate into a country with this much hostility? ... asylum seekers ... been cut? ... admit it's not

Free speech

Nothing here falls under hate speech. She is expressing ideas and opinions, not any hate speech towards any particular groups.

... the British aristocracy.

You do know all this is a distraction from the fact 50 families own 50% of the wealth in Britain, right?



Amy

Free Speech or Hate Speech?

Remember

Free speech means you can share your opinions.

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You can talk about immigration, politics, or your identity.

But hate speech is not allowed.

Hate speech is when someone uses words to attack or spread hate against others because of their race, religion, gender, or sexuality.

Hate speech can lead to police action or even jail.



Whiteboards

TASK: Using your whiteboards, answer the following questions.

True or False

Free Speech means you can say what you want, whenever you want, about whatever you want

FALSE

If you're attacking people for who they are, that's hate speech

Whiteboards

TASK: Using your whiteboards, answer the following questions.

True or False

The majority of immigrants come
on small boats

FALSE

A very small percentage of
immigrants enter the UK illegally.

Whiteboards

TASK: Using your whiteboards, answer the following questions.

Name a country where using flags and national symbols caused people to divide in to 'us' and 'them'?

Yugoslavia

These divisions eventually led to war

Whiteboards

TASK: Using your whiteboards, answer the following questions.

Criticising an idea is... ?

Free Speech

Whiteboards

TASK: Using your whiteboards, answer the following questions.

Attacking someone for who they
are is... ?

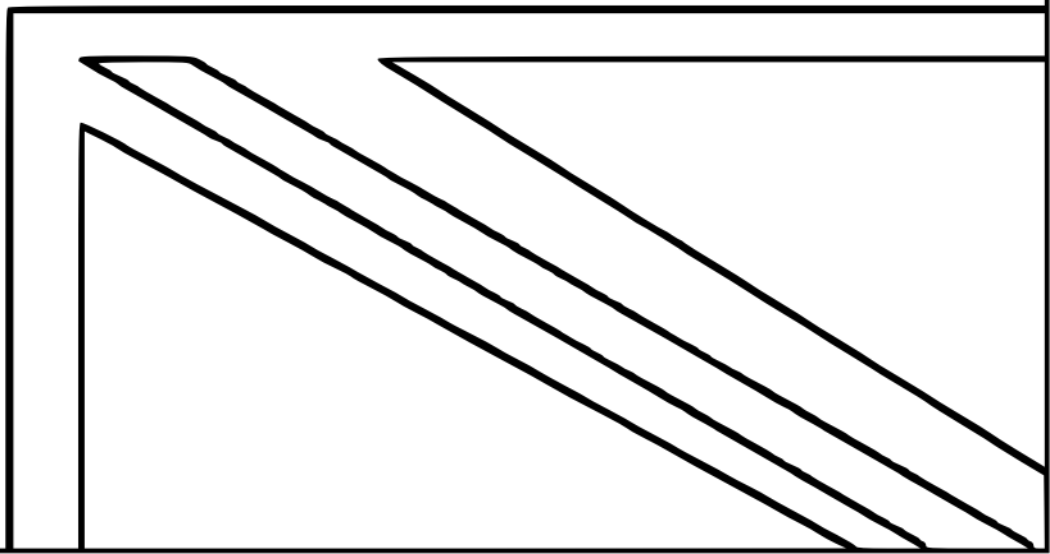
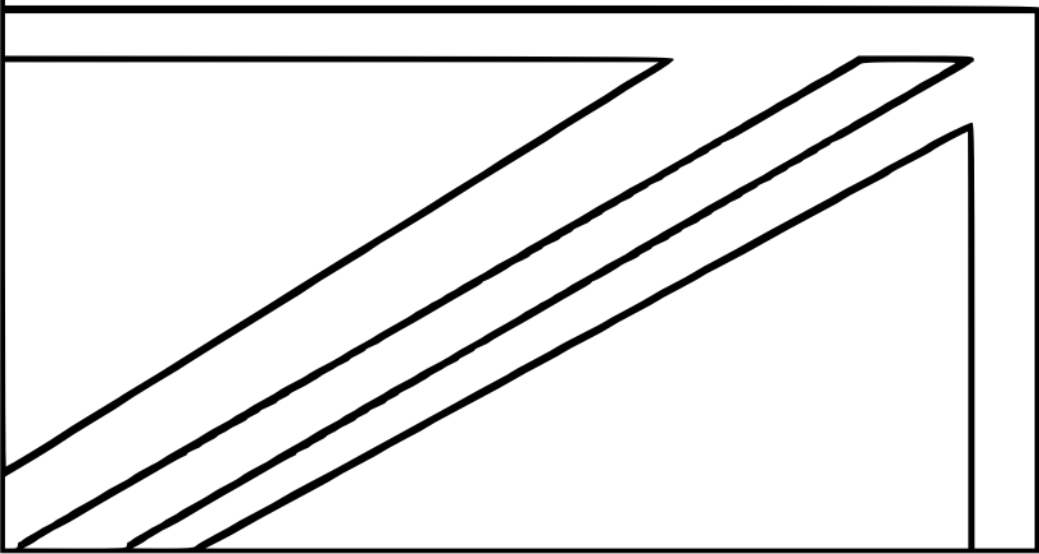
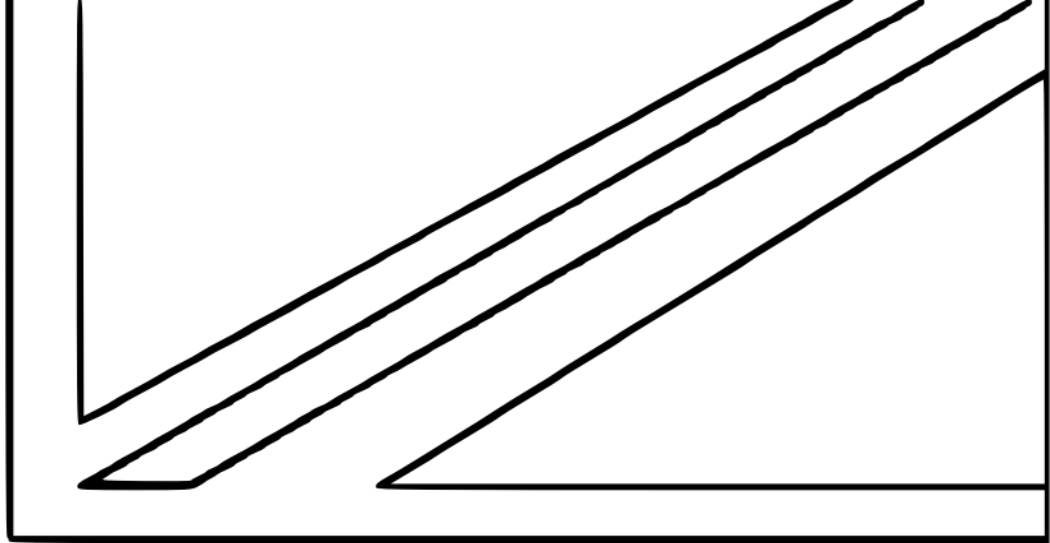
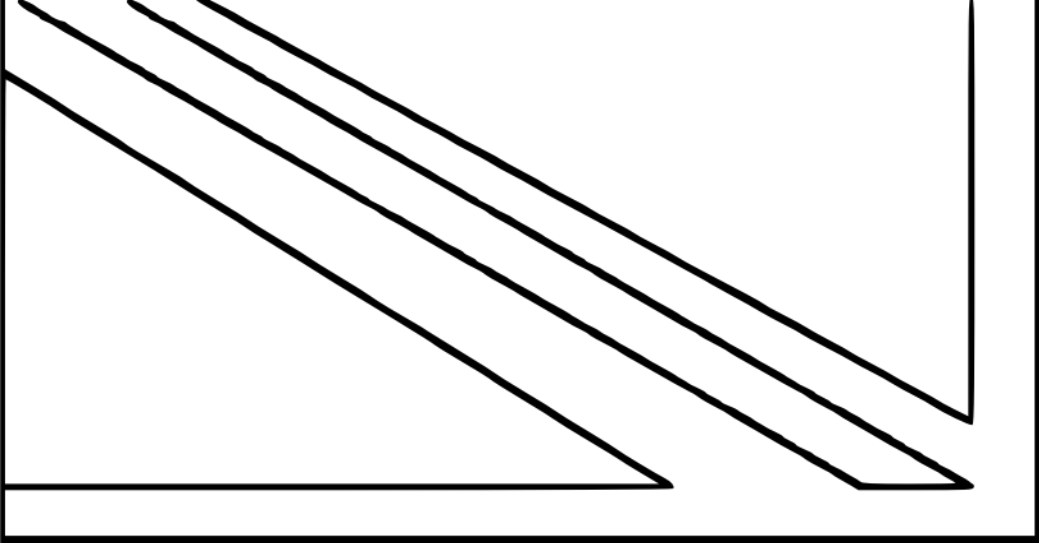
Hate Speech

Why are British Values so important for us all?



TASK 4: Fill your flags! Using your Union Jack template, your knowledge of British Values, and what you have discovered today— fill the flag with what you would like to see in a peaceful, prosperous Britain.

It can very unpleasant to see all this conflict in our country. Make your flags positive, happy, colourful and full of ideas for the future to promote harmony, integration, mutual understanding and peace.





Plenary

How do our values fit with the theme of today's lesson?

Which values have we dealt with today?

PARKSIDE VALUES

WHO WE ARE



RESILIENCE

The ability to recover quickly from difficult conditions and succeed.



RESPECT

Showing consideration and positive regard for others.



RESPONSIBILITY

The act of being accountable for actions and being in charge of learning.



COMMUNITY

Working together for great educational experiences.

EMBARK VALUES

WHO WE ARE



FAMILY

We are part of our own school family but also a wider federation family. Everyone is important and we work together to achieve the very best for our children.



INTEGRITY

'Doing the right thing when nobody is watching.' To have integrity you have to be committed, courageous, honest, disciplined and resilient.



TEAMWORK

We are proud of each other and our achievements. We rely on one another and understand that everyone has a part to play in our success.



SUCCESS

Success to us means every child and member of staff fulfilling their potential. We strive for everyone in our federation to 'be the best they can be.'

Safeguarding information

Who is your trusted adult in school?

If you have a problem, or need to speak to someone, contact one of the safeguarding team, or another trusted adult in school

We are here to support you with any challenges including...

- Keeping you safe
- Accessing Learning
- Self-discipline
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships with others
- Staying Safe Online
- Self-identity

Who to talk to if you need support...



Mr Mills
Deputy Headteacher
Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Ms Michell
Early Help & Deputy
Safeguarding Lead



Ms Browes
Assistant Pastoral
Manager



Ms Bover
Assistant head
teacher for
Student Culture



Ms Welsh
Senior Leader for
Student Behaviour
& Attitudes



Mr Fletcher
Pastoral Manager



Ms Beardsmore
Community support
and Early Help

Parkside Support Centre Staff

All other Parkside Staff

Email Reporting

If you don't feel like you can talk to anybody, please email:
safeguarding@parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk