

British values

Our values

My values



UK Law

Name:

Date:

Teacher:

UK law

Rules and law - what's the difference?

Everybody must follow rules, at school there are many rules that you need to follow every day. Rules are there to keep school in order and make sure that everybody understands what they can and can't do. Different places have different rules and rules might not always apply to everyone.

If you broke a rule there would be consequences.



Task - Reflect on the rules in place at your school. Once you have answered the questions yourself you can compare with your class.

	<p>What rules does your school have that are just for students to follow?</p>
	<p>What rules does your school have that are for staff and students to follow?</p>
	<p>Why do you think there are different rules for staff and students?</p>
	<p>Why do you think some students find it difficult to follow school rules?</p>

Laws are like rules. They help to keep society in order and make sure that citizens living in a country know what they can and cannot do.

The main difference is that the law applies to *everyone* in that country, everyone must follow the law and if the law is broken there are specific procedures that must be followed.

Citizens are more likely to follow the law if they feel that it is fair and useful. Therefore, lots of time and thought needs to go into making laws and citizens need to trust that the law will apply to everyone.



Task – Work in a small group to list 5 rules and 5 laws. Then consider what society might be like with no rules or laws.

Rules	Laws
No rules:	No laws:

The Rule of Law

Many years ago, the monarch had complete control over what happened in the country. The king was above the law and citizens had little control over the law of the land.

Today, in the UK, things are very different. Everyone is equal before the law and most laws are made by people in power who have been chosen by the citizens of the country.



Task – What problems might occur if there is one person holding all the power in a country?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box intended for students to write their answers to the task question.

How are laws made?



Most of our laws are made in Parliament. The government will have lots of ideas for new laws, for example, they might want to change the age that you can do something, or they might want to make something illegal that wasn't before. Laws must be debated and discussed with everyone in Parliament to make sure that they are fair. Once the idea for a new law has been discussed, debated, adapted and agreed, it becomes an Act of Parliament (law)

There are some very strange terms that are used to describe how laws are made. When the government makes the rough draft of ideas it's called a **Green Paper**, when the ideas are finalised it becomes a **White Paper** (this is a bit like a rough draft and neat copy of work) When a new law is being introduced it is called a **bill**, like the name but without the capital letter!

But what about the Queen?

Once a bill is ready to become an Act of Parliament, it is sent to the Queen for her signature. This is called **Royal assent**. The Queen signing the bill is the very last thing to happen before it becomes law. The Queen will always sign the bill because we have a democracy. It would be undemocratic for the Queen to not agree to something that had been debated, discussed and agreed by Parliament.

Task – If you could introduce a bill to Parliament, what would it be? Brainstorm your idea, then share it with your class. Would they agree to it?

Different types of law

There are two different types of law, criminal and civil.

Criminal Law	Civil Law
	
<p>This is when someone has committed a crime like robbery or assault, they have gone against an Act of Parliament. As you will know from the last page, Parliament make laws and the Queen signs them, therefore criminal law is between Parliament and the lawbreakers.</p> <p>These crimes will be heard in a magistrate court (less serious) or crown court (very serious)</p> <p>If the person is found guilty they will be punished, this could mean paying a fine or going to prison.</p>	<p>This is when there is a disagreement between two people or groups of people, normally to do with rights. For example, neighbours disagreeing about a shared gate or divorced parents disagreeing about where the children should live.</p> <p>These cases might be heard in a county court or small claims court. With civil cases, a decision will be made about who is in the right and who is more in the wrong.</p> <p>Actions will then be agreed as a result.</p>



Task – Write a definition for each type of law, using exactly 40 words!

The age of criminal responsibility

From age 10, if you commit a crime, you are criminally responsible. This means you are old enough to understand the difference between right and wrong and therefore could be punished if found guilty of a crime. Children (10-17) that are accused of a crime will go to a less formal court and if sent to prison will go to a special prison for young people, but they will be expected to go through, pretty much, the same legal procedures as an adult.



On the one hand, some people agree with the age of criminal responsibility because they believe that everyone is equal before the law and children should not be allowed to get away with committing crimes. They believe that at ten years old, children understand if their actions are right or wrong.

On the other hand, some people disagree with the age of criminal responsibility because they believe that children who commit crimes are probably victims themselves and need support not punishment. They believe that children might make silly mistakes because they do not fully understand the difference between right and wrong.



Task – What is your opinion on the age of criminal responsibility?
Once you have thought about this yourself, debate with your class.



Task – Design a logo that aims to educate children about the age of criminal responsibility.