

Key Vocabulary...

MP	Member of Parliament (House of Commons only)
Parliament	The collective name for the House of Commons, House of Lords and the Sovereign.
House of Commons	A chamber of 650 elected members that has the power to form a government and select a prime minister.
House of Lords	The 'upper house' of Parliament which has unelected members that scrutinise laws and help to make and change them.
Monarch/ Sovereign	Similar to rights, this means things that a citizen is allowed to do.
Legislation	Laws which are created through a complicated process involving all three parts of Parliament.
Cabinet	The top ministers of government appointed from Parliament by the Prime Minister.
Minister	An MP that has a specific area of responsibility within the UK government.

The British Values and Some Other Rights

Democracy	The idea that the people should be able to collectively choose their leaders.
The Rule of Law	The idea that all people should follow the law and be treated equally by the law.
Individual Liberty	The idea that people should be free to choose their own path in life.
Mutual Respect and Tolerance	The idea that no one should be mistreated based on their race, gender, religion, disability or any other difference.
Participation in Community Life	This means making choices that do not harm the community you live in and where possible you contribute to society overall.
Freedom of Speech	The idea that people should be free to express themselves and their views without fear of punishment.
The Right to Protest unfair Treatment	Within certain rules, UK citizens are legally allowed to protest against treatment or rules that they deem unfair.
Human Rights	The basic rights which are considered to be common to all people rather than having to be earned.

Factors in Democracy

Vote	An individual person's choice of representative in Parliament.
Election	An event in which people vote to decide who will take certain elected positions.
Suffrage	The right to vote.
Constituency	The country is divided into 650 of these, each one can elect an MP to represent the people living there.
Manifesto	A document which sets out the plans and policies of a political party if they were to be elected to office.
Political Party	A group of people that share similar political view that work together, hoping enough members will be elected to form a government.

The Big Idea

Our political system is a parliamentary democracy that has developed over centuries, and as such it has what is known as an 'unwritten constitution'. This means that there is not one single document, or constitution which sets out the rules and processes for the operation of the government. Instead, our government is bound by centuries of tradition and legislation. Legislation means the body of laws created over the years by Parliament, and collectively these dictate how the government works. Tradition dictates how these laws are applied in practice, and especially the role of the sovereign.

Always Remember...

- All populations change over time. This is a normal process that has happened throughout history. There can be changes in ethnicity, average age, religious makeup and also cultural changes too.
- We need to stay informed about changes and the main way to start is to read the local and national news as events have consequences for the citizens of a country.
- Along with having rights, we also have responsibilities too. If everyone has the right to healthcare, then we have a responsibility to pay taxes which pays for doctors, nurses, hospitals and ambulances.

Deeper Learning...

Define the following terms: Parliament, Constitution, Democracy, Sovereign.
Describe two functions of the House of Commons.
Explain how a government is formed after a general election.
Explain the role of select committees in Parliament.
'The UK has a largely undemocratic government.'
How far do you agree with this statement.

Activity - Research how an idea becomes a white paper and then a law in the UK through Parliament.