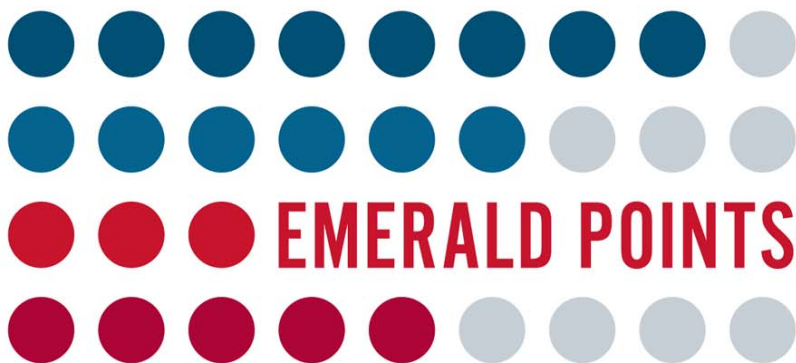


# FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES IN EDUCATION

Radicalisation, National Identity  
and Britishness

Lynn Revell and Hazel Bryan



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Radicalisation, National  
Identity and Britishness

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*To Bertie Townhill and John Revell*

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# INTRODUCTION

It seems as though the notion of Britishness and national identity have never been addressed with such intensity and seriousness in education as they have in recent years. Education has been used repeatedly as a resource to promote, develop or transmit a sense of nationhood (Lowe, 1999), and in that sense, the requirement to promote a model of Britishness through the curriculum is not unusual. What is new is both the politicised nature of the values associated with Britishness and the security agenda in which schools now operate. In education we have experienced and continue to experience levels of change and impermanence so that constantly changing policies and new initiatives sometimes feel as if they are the only certainty that teachers can rely on. Amidst this perpetual buffeting of flux, a discourse on the role of national values, promoted and cultivated through education, has emerged. All schools now must demonstrate that they promote fundamental British values; they all produce policies and examples of how these values are met through the curriculum and the wider activities and ethos of the school. Organisations that relate to all areas of education — unions,

professional bodies, resource hubs, dioceses, national associations — now routinely produce their own guidance on how their members and users can promote fundamental British values. Two years ago an online search produced no returns for textbooks on fundamental British values, yet now resources and artefacts to be used in lessons are readily available and the list of textbooks and teacher guides is rapidly increasing. The requirement to not undermine or to promote fundamental British values is repeated and regulated through law and policy that relates to education, including the most recent Teachers' Standards. Finally, schools will now be inspected in this new area through the Ofsted cycle of inspection.

Two events confirmed the status of fundamental British values as the major factor in the way schools now engage with the issue of national identity and values. The 2014 'Trojan Horse' affair, where some academy schools in Birmingham were subject to investigation after an anonymous letter to the Department for Education alerted officials to the possibility that governors and teachers were promoting an extremist agenda, signalled the seriousness with which schools were to take their duties in relation to fundamental British values. This marks a turning point in what has come to be termed 'the securitisation of education' (Farrell 2016). Although no school involved was found to have broken the law, the resulting scandal generated widespread fear and confusion about the nature of religious freedom in schools and even the function of public education (Arthur 2015). The second event was the aftershock of the Trojan Horse affair. In 2014 Ofsted carried out 35 'no notice' inspections and criticised 11 state schools for failing to prepare pupils for life in Britain, placing pupils at risk of marginalisation after failing to provide access to a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and for failing to promote understanding of various faiths or

‘tolerance of communities different to their own’. The inspections were carried out in the wake of the Trojan Horse affair and headlines in the press gave the impression that some schools were failing in their duty to promote fundamental British values. The ‘no notice’ inspections were also a signal to schools that fundamental British values were not only to be taken seriously in schools with Muslim pupils, they were to be addressed rigorously by all schools, Christian or Muslim, academies and community schools alike.

This book aims to examine the significance of fundamental British values in education. It will explore the idea of British values as they appear in contemporary policy and legislation as well as the way Britishness as a concept has evolved in relation to education in the post-war period. The book is organised in two parts. Part One (Chapters 1 and 2) will chart the development of Britishness and British values in the post-war period and show how even in the recent past British values have been understood and executed in policy in relation to schools in very different ways. In the past, Britishness and national identity were either assumed or conveyed through the employment of cultural forms; it is only now that Britishness in education, in the form of fundamental British values, is articulated through explicitly political language. Part Two (Chapters 3 and 4) will examine the impact of fundamental British values on teacher professionalism. It will show how the legislation and policy that structure the way teachers (and other educators) must engage with fundamental British values work to reposition the status of teachers in the public sphere. Teachers’ work and relationship with the state is recast so that personal, political and individual acts are now situated within the remit of state control and legislation. The concept of ‘Liquid Professionalism’ is promoted as a form of teacher professionalism for these securitised times.

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# PART ONE

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# CHAPTER 1

## RADICALISATION AND FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES

### INTRODUCTION

There is no such thing as a set of values that is British; there are only the values that particular governments or policy documents at specific times insist are British. This first chapter charts the way a range of British values in education have been developed and promoted in two separate periods. The first period, from the mid-1990s to the end of the Brown Labour government in 2007, is notable as a time when British values were more likely to be articulated through cultural motifs that referenced a romanticised English past, to a time when British values are now articulated through political ideas that are presented as liberal values. The second period examines Britishness as a form of national identity as it was expressed in education through three key moments: the turn of the 20th century, the 1944 Education Act and the restorationist agenda of the ‘new right’ from the mid-1980s. The chapter argues that the articulation of ‘Britishness’ through political concepts is a significant development in the



contemporary period and represents a break from past notions of Britishness that were either racialised or took the form of cultural narratives. The chapter begins with an overview of the origins of fundamental British values and the way they are presented in texts, policies and resources in schools.

### TEXTS, POLICIES AND RESOURCES

The origin of fundamental British values is rooted in a positioning of radical Islam as a threat to liberal democracy. The phrase ‘fundamental British values’ appeared in the UK counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST as part of Prevent, and they must be first understood as an integral part of how educators are expected to identify and stop extremism. However, the notion of a prescribed set of British values established in relation to the perceived threat of Muslim extremism has an earlier genesis. In 2006 the Muslim Council of Great Britain, an umbrella group that represents over 500 Islamic organisations, refused to take part in Holocaust Memorial Day celebrations, arguing that the day should commemorate all genocides (BBC, 2006). In response, Ruth Kelly, then minister for Communities, demanded that organisations that ‘refuse to defend core British values’ and fail to take part in a ‘pro-active’ role in the fight against extremism should lose access to funding (Helm, 2006). Speaking at a meeting with Muslim groups at Government House, she stated that the government would no longer support groups that do not ‘stand up for our shared values and that people of all faiths in Britain shared “non-negotiable values” such as respect for the law and freedom of speech’ (Blitz, 2006). Kelly along with the then Minister for Immigration, Liam Byrne, had identified the common values they thought were British in a Fabian pamphlet. These included, ‘commitment to Britain, loyalty to

our legal and political institutions, fairness and open mindedness, freedom of speech, respect for others and a tradition of tolerance' (Kelly & Byrne, 2006, p. 7). The pamphlet, *A Common Place*, included a call to establish a Britain Day that would help groups forge community relations that demonstrate 'a commitment to Britain and its people and loyalty to our legal and political institutions' (Kelly & Byrne, 2006).

The perceived 'crisis of British values' has a genesis older than the recent preoccupation with fundamental British values (Wolton, 2006) and is shaped by ongoing critiques of multiculturalism (Parekh, 2000). New Labour commissioned a report that argued Britain needs common values to give it a sense of cohesion and in 2001 Jack Straw, the then Home Secretary, argued that it was the absence of common values that had weakened notions of citizenship (Blunkett, 2001) but core to any understanding of the way fundamental British values emerged in education policy is a recognition of how the relationship between promoting a set of British values and a particular model of Islam was established. *A Common Place* begins with a call for a new Britishness that could oppose the twin extremisms of radical Islam and the far right but thereafter makes no mention of the far right and repeatedly makes reference to the behaviour and expectations of Muslim communities. The relationship between the assumed threat posed by some Muslims to liberal democracy and the promotion of British values was reinforced by a number of high profile and influential position papers and discussions. Chief among them was the publication in 2006 of *Celsius 7/7* written by Michael Gove. *Celsius 7/7* describes what Gove refers to as 'Islamism as totalitarianism' and likens it to Nazism and Communism. Gove goes on to argue that the West has failed to defend liberal democracy and that there was a general failure to confront extremism in Whitehall, especially in the Home Office. Gove's influence on

counter-terrorism policy, on the government's approach to Islam and Muslims and to counter-terrorism, is thought to have been strengthened through his appointment to the Extremism Taskforce, set up in the wake of Drummer Lee Rigby's murder in 2013 (Hasan, 2014).

The relationship between the inculcation of national values and national cohesion through education has its genesis in the London bombings in 2005 (Osler, 2008). In the short time that fundamental British values have been a part of the policy and education landscape they have become the salient part of the anti-terrorism strategy and have therefore elevated the role of education in the fight against terrorism. The Prevent Strategy is one of four strands that are designed to create a comprehensive and interconnecting series of measures to deal with aspects of a terrorist threat. Coordinated by the Office for Security and Counter-terrorism in the Home Office, the Prevent Strategy and fundamental British values are an integral part of the UK's war on terror. While other strands of CONTEST deal with the physical prevention of an attack, such as the strengthening of protection against an attack and measures to mitigate the impact of an attack (Pursue, Protect and Prepare), the focus of Prevent is to halt the spread and rise of extremism through disrupting the process of radicalisation.

First developed by a Labour government in 2006, Prevent determined how schools are expected to act; the definition of extremism, however, has evolved. The 2011 version of CONTEST mentions education once; thereafter it becomes one of a long list of groups/sectors (religious groups, the voluntary sector and the Internet) that are identified as having responsibility for combatting extremism. This first version of Prevent was characterised by a cautious approach to the way it presented the relationship between extremism and radicalisation. It urged caution in the way educators approached the

possibilities of extremism and radicalisation; it included recommendations for the Department for Education, including ‘establishing a set of standards for teachers, which clarifies obligations regarding extremism’. The report recognised that some pupils were at risk and that they should be helped but added the caveat that any such support and intervention should be ‘proportionate’ and that ‘[i]t should not start from a misplaced assumption that there is a significant problem that needs to be resolved’ (Home Office, 2011, 10:44). By the time the second edition of Prevent was published it stated in the Foreword that the previous strategy had been neither rigorous nor effective enough in its approach to combatting extremism. It is in this context that the concept of fundamental British values was pushed to the fore as the focus for anti-extremism and as a symbol of resistance against violence and terror.

Just as importantly the link between fundamental British values, education and radicalisation also established a narrative that traces a link between a failure to commit to certain values and extremism, and then from extremism to terrorism. In the original version of Prevent the document referred to violent extremism, but its most recent incarnation refers simply to extremism. This means that the discourse on extremism has also shifted from one that focused on violent extremism to extremism — and extremism is now defined as being in opposition to British values. The definition of Britishness, once merely a subject for academic debate, pop surveys and patriotic politicians is now established as part of a discourse that critiques multiculturalism, segregation and diversity and positions this critique in relation to the fight against terrorism (Finney & Simpson, 2009; Lander, 2016).

The status of fundamental British values as a benchmark of anti-extremism and of the privileged role of education in anti-terrorism was heightened when the phrase was included in the Teachers’ Standards (DfE, 2012). The Teachers’

Standards are organised in two parts, the second of which is entitled ‘Personal and Professional Conduct’. It is here that teachers are instructed to ‘not undermine fundamental British values’ (DfE, 2012, p. 9). The document makes it clear that the terms and the definition are a repetition of the phrase as it is used in the Prevent Strategy and in doing so makes explicit the link between counter-terrorism, education, the role of the teacher and the values that teachers are expected to hold (Bryan, 2012). In an exceptional move the Teacher’s Standards go on to insist that all teachers must uphold these values both in their professional lives as teachers in schools and also in the private domain. The consequences of this demand and the impact it has on the nature of teacher professionalism will be explored in the Part Two of this book.

#### RESOURCES, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE — FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES IN PRACTICE

*At the beginning of the last century, Britain had the biggest empire in history: bigger than the Roman Empire, bigger than the Mongol Empire, bigger than the Empire of Alexander the Great.*

Yeates (2016, p. 22), *God Bless the Queen*

Resources produced to teach fundamental British values and guidance written to support the promotion of fundamental British values are overwhelmingly characterised by compliance and an awareness both of the legal status of the duty and of the possible consequences if fundamental British values are not promoted. Some voices have questioned the way fundamental British values have been presented in policy (O’Donnell, 2017) and others have drawn attention to the possible discriminatory impact of the values on Muslims

(Scott-Bauman, 2017). However, the dominant theme underpinning resources and guidelines for fundamental British values is compliance, and the model of Britishness that emerges from the materials is monolithic and one dimensional. In many resources, compliance takes the form of materials that rarely trouble the nature of the values or which present them in ways that are simplistic and formulaic. In guidance and policies produced by schools and professional bodies, compliance takes the form of mapping the policies to the law and an awareness of the regulatory role of both Ofsted and Prevent in relation to school policy.

The Times Educational Supplement provides a list of the most favourably reviewed materials on fundamental British values (TES, 2015). In one resource on the list, a teacher provides a set of activities for a British Values Week: Tuesday (Rule of Law Day) is an example of the type of work teachers are providing for pupils. The PowerPoint asks a series of questions about the law: How old do you have to be to be held criminally responsible? Where are serious offences, like murder, heard? And, what is the name of the person who is in charge of a court? It informs pupils that ‘many laws go back to the Magna Carta’ and that ‘many countries base their laws on Britain’s’. The lesson is not just geared towards imparting a knowledge of the legal system — later in the PowerPoint presentation pupils are asked to reflect on the authority of the law in relation to a number of cases including the case of Marine Alexander Blackman who was sentenced to life imprisonment for shooting an injured Taliban soldier in Afghanistan. There is no evidence in the earlier part of the presentation that pupils are or will be engaged in discussions about the nature of justice or the basis on which laws are legitimate, yet the second half of the lesson is clearly designed to do this. The presentation reflects a desire on the part of the teacher to contribute to knowledge and to reflect

on the problematic nature of some aspects of fundamental British values.

Similarly, a resource book produced to support teachers of Religious Education, *Religious Education and British Values*, includes ideas for lessons that both celebrate and problematise fundamental British values. One section on tolerance and respect advocates these values as positive but also illustrates, through a discussion on Islamophobia, how context and politics means these values are historically and culturally situated (Blaylock, Kate, & Moss, 2016). This dual approach to fundamental British values, especially in materials designed for Key Stages 3 and 4, blends a way of teaching about fundamental British values that conforms to the requirements to promote fundamental British values but in ways that also allow teachers to explore and trouble over some aspects of the values. It is also an approach that would demand a level of confidence and knowledge on the part of the teacher both in relation to the law, democracy and tolerance, and in engaging with controversial issues in the classroom — skills that we know many teachers are not prepared for either in their training or through professional development (Oulton, Day, & Dillon, 2007).

In contrast, the majority of resources produced for younger children lack any critical dimension; their aim is to encourage pupils to celebrate and engage positively with fundamental British values. In many resources, the desire to celebrate means authors sometimes provide explanations that are simplistic, jingoistic and which misrepresent the full meaning of the values. The *British Values Series for Key Stage 2* is a good example of texts that would not be out of place in a pre-World War I classroom. *God Bless the Queen* looks at the role of the monarchy and considers the contemporary and historical role of kings and queens, including the link with Empire and the Commonwealth. Apart from establishing that

the British Empire was very big and that it sometimes ‘involved a lot of conquering and not a little bloodshed’ (Yeates, 2016, p. 23), it presents the link between the Monarchy, the Empire and the Commonwealth as a series of benign relationships. The Queen is described as being a ‘great source of wisdom’ and a symbol of national identity who is able to act in a unifying role as she interacts ‘with all sorts of people on a daily basis’ (Yeates, 2016, p. 15). The book is also typical of other books in that although support for the Monarchy is not identified as a British value in Prevent, resources often interpret fundamental British values as support for royalty or with the promotion of nostalgic activities and pastimes (Osborne, 2016).

Resources for both primary and secondary schools are predominantly uncritical of fundamental British values. Perhaps this is not surprising as these materials have been written in part, so that schools can demonstrate compliance with Prevent and Ofsted. Very few materials and resources trouble over the ideas of tolerance or respect for difference, but we came across none that sought to engage pupils with the legitimacy of the values themselves it was frequently the case that the values were dealt with in an uneven manner. The values were often dealt with in an uneven manner. Respect for difference, tolerance, liberty and democracy seemed to generate a variety of activities and ideas for lessons. The Rule of Law, however, is persistently explained as ‘obeying the law’, encouraging children ‘to respect those in authority’ (Osborne, 2016, p. 25) or explaining individual accountability to the law. The imperative to promote democracy, the Rule of Law, tolerance and respect for difference as values means that these concepts, practices and traditions are presented as uncontested truths. The notion that all of these ideas have been and continue to be contested and are the product of often violent conflict is mostly absent in resources



(Wolton, 2017). This static approach to the presentation of fundamental British values not only misrepresents the history of these ideas, it also distorts their meaning as political concepts, an idea that will be explored further in the next chapter.

## CONTROVERSY AND GUIDELINES

*By the way, did it ever occur to you to call them  
just: 'Values'?*

Michael Rosen

A recurring theme in the guidance and resources produced by some professional bodies is a reminder to their members that the requirement to promote fundamental British values is statutory and regulated by Ofsted. That is, schools and practitioners who fail to demonstrate compliance with the law or with Ofsted will be penalised. The online social networking platform for childcare providers, [Childcare.co.uk](http://Childcare.co.uk), warns its members that 'Whether you agree with it or not, Ofsted inspectors are required to make a judgement about how well we deliver a curriculum which includes teaching children about British values' (Neville, 2016). The regulatory nature of the requirement to promote fundamental British values can also be seen in the way some resources carefully lay out the benchmarks and indicators that inspection will seek to identify as proof of compliance on the part of providers. In *Promoting Fundamental British Values in the Early Years* the authors include an end section on 'The Prevent Duty and your Ofsted inspection' which provides a detailed grid that itemises 'What will inspectors do?' and another entitled 'What are they looking for?' The book provides a 'Prevent duty checklist' as well as a summary of requirements from Ofsted documentation (Sargent, 2016). Similarly, the

Foundation Years website warns its members that if providers adopt a minimalist approach they will fall short of the requirement ‘to actively promote’ and could be penalised. The website provides examples of what the Duty means in practice and they go on to reassure their members that ‘We have shared these with the DfE who agree that they are helpful examples’ ([Foundationyears.org.uk](http://Foundationyears.org.uk)). The message is that the ‘requirement to actively promote fundamental British values’ will be taken seriously by Ofsted and the Home Office and that organisations that fail to thoroughly embed them will be penalised.

The majority of resources written for teachers or guidelines produced by professional bodies are uncritical of the notion of fundamental British Values or of the requirement to promote them in schools. However, there are some voices of disquiet. The National Union of Teachers passed a motion at its annual conference in 2016 condemning fundamental British values as an act of cultural supremacism and called on teachers to celebrate human values and anti-racism rather than fundamental British values (Espinoza, 2016). Many of the critical voices tend to focus not on the values themselves but on the fact that they are labelled British. In a letter to Michael Gove, the then Secretary for Education, the Children’s Laureate Michael Rosen accused the government of semantics in its use of the term British (Rosen, 2014). He argued that when the government placed the term British in front of the values it did so with the express intention of persuading us ‘that there is indeed something specially British about the items on the checklist’. He went on to say that not only was the use of the adjective British ‘parochial, patronising and arrogant’ but that expecting teachers to imply that values like democracy are uniquely British is tantamount to expecting them to lie in the classroom. Rosen ends his letter with a rhetorical question ‘By the way, did it ever occur to you to call them just: “Values”?’ The puzzle over the use of

the term 'British' in relation to values is echoed in the claim that schools and teachers are already 'doing' the values but not in way that explicitly badge them as British. On the Key for School Governors website one article argues that there is no need for a separate British Values Policy because British values are already incorporated through existing school policies ([schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com](http://schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com)).

The sense of Britishness that emerges from resources and the hundreds of school policies and guidelines posted online has three themes. The first is the monolithic nature of the values and the way they are discussed and presented. The same phrases, examples and even activities are endlessly repeated. Books and resources stress that there are five British values; there is no sense that some British people may have other values or indeed that other values even exist. The implication is that people living in Britain who have other values are not truly British.

The second is that the values are promoted in the context of a threat to the safety of children and young people. The message is simple, these values are celebrated and cherished because they counter radicalisation, and they act as a focus around which national identity can be cohered and in doing so create a narrative that challenges extremism (Farrell, 2016). This aspect is particularly evident in guidelines produced by professional organisations and school policies where it is normal to include quotes from and references to Prevent or the Prevent Duty Guidance and in some cases the Counter-Terrorism Act 2015 itself.

The third theme is evidence of a single narrative of the nature of Britishness. The narrative is of a Britishness that is signalled by heroic figures (monarchs, explorers, philanthropists, inventors), a national character defined by courage, integrity and honour and a collage of institutions and practices that are a product of the first two. As they appear in resources, the values are eternally and exclusively British. In this scenario Britain has always been a democracy, the British

people have always been tolerant and the Rule of Law has always existed. These very political values and practices are presented not as the result of political acts but as the consequence of a British personality that abhors injustice, corruption, violence, bigotry and discrimination.

## THE DECLINE OF BRITISHNESS

### *Britain is in danger of disappearing*

Ian Bradley (2008)

Perhaps the most striking feature of the move to engage all places of education in the promotion of British values, including schools, is just how successful it has been. A precursor to successfully insisting that the promotion of Britishness is the duty of schools is the success in reversing the decline of the notion of Britishness itself. The pervasiveness of the discussion about decline is important because its key themes frame the revival of Britishness as an idea in education.

Writing about the identity of being British, Ian Bradley began his book with the sentence 'Britain is in danger of disappearing' (Bradley, 2008, p. 1). Although his opening sentence is sensationalist, it did reflect a commonly held view that Great Britain as a geographical, political and ideological entity was in peril. At the time the most recent general household survey revealed that less than a third of adults living in the United Kingdom chose to define themselves as British. Even in England where a sense of Britishness as an identity is usually stronger (Bradley, 2008) only 48% of the population identified as British.

For some, the crisis of Britishness is perennial (Gamble & Wright, 2007). For others its most recent manifestation is rooted in the 1970s (Ward, 2004). Linda Colley refers to the 1980s as a time when the debates about the decline of Britain were pathological (Colley, 2005). Tom Nairn famously

extended the debate about the sense of decline to a consideration of the actual break-up of the nation (2015), and the fragility of the union was in part confirmed by two interlinked reports commissioned by the Commission for Racial Equality in 2005 and 2006. The first report *Citizenship and Belonging: What is Britishness?* discussed the findings of research that found that there are common markers of Britishness, shared across different demographic groups. There are also significant differences. The second report, *The Decline of Britishness — A Research Study*, argued that a common theme in the debates with all groups of white people was a perceived decline in Britishness.

The dominant theme in these reports is not just that Britishness is in decline but that the decline has been brought about by a loss of coherence in core values. Most white participants were distressed by the decline in Britishness and attributed the decline to four factors: the large numbers of migrants in the country, unfair claims made by people from ethnic minorities on the welfare state, the rise in moral pluralism and the failure to manage ethnic minority groups due to what participants termed ‘political correctness’ (Ethnos, 2006). It is the belief that plurality and a diversity of values have eroded Britishness and this frames the current drive to embed them in education.

#### BRITISH VALUES: WHAT ARE THEY?

*Be proud of your country but define Britishness yourself.*

Jim Knight, Minister of State for Schools  
and Learning (2007)

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of fundamental British values is the values themselves. The impression given by the many documents and policies they appear in, from the

Counter-Terrorism Act 2015 to the most recent Teachers Standards, is that these values have always been British values. Yet even in recent education policy other values have been identified as British. Not only have values other than democracy and, for example, the Rule of Law been identified as British but the role that national values are expected to play in education has also changed. In her analysis of the way key public and political figures discuss patriotism, citizenship and multiculturalism between 1997 and the period following the 2005 bombings in London, Audrey Osler notes that not only was there a marked increase in public debate in Britain around these issues but much of this discussion was informed by the belief in a commitment to shared civic values (2009).

The next section in this chapter will examine how different values have been identified as British in the recent period by exploring key policies and statements by policy leaders between the beginning of New Labour in 1996 and the first iteration of Prevent in 2011. What emerges is a fluid understanding of the role of nationally defined values in education and an emerging discourse on the significance of civic values positioned against a model of national identity informed by a commitment to multiculturalism. This period can be characterised as one where a new consensus emerges on the need to establish core values as part of a project to develop national cohesion as a counter-measure to the destabilising effects of multiculturalism. This replaces a former model of Britishness informed by cultural motifs of the past.

Britishness is an unstable concept that is made and remade by the experiences of different communities and by their relationships with one another (Hall, 1992). The Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities in Britain revealed that for some groups not only what it means to be British changes but that new forms of relational identities have emerged. Britishness is also a concept that can be consciously promoted

and crafted by governments. New Labour was associated with a project of creating a progressive form of Britishness, one that was not associated with heritage images of cream teas and red buses and more importantly one that was free from associations with race and bigotry (Modood, 2003), which was seen to embrace pluralism and celebrated diversity (Leonard, 1997).

Prime Minister Tony Blair identified what he considered to be British characteristics at the 1996 Labour Party conference as 'common sense, standing up for the underdog and being fiercely independent'. For Blair these national traits not only meant that the British could boast 'the invention of virtually every scientific device in the modern world' but that it was possible to bring about a regeneration and reinvention of Britishness that was based on shared creativity and innovation (Blair, 1996). The New Labour intervention into the Britishness debate was fuelled by the belief that the regeneration of a dynamic modern Britain was hampered by an absence of shared values. Blair's choice of British values was clichéd and bombastic but they marked a move away from an identity built around cultural icons of the past and a move towards values that could be considered contemporary. The creation of a huge Dome, filled with vignettes, each representing a facet of Britishness in the Docklands as part of the national celebrations of the Millennium was intended to capture this new spirit of a modern Britain. Although it was a failure with the public (Dennis, 2000) its celebration of modern Britain signalled a new approach to Britishness that was modern and forward thinking; however, it was still an approach that in the main retained an approach to national values that focused on culture.

Labour's support for the work of the National Forum for Values in Education and the Community was an example of this new understanding of national identity and also indicated

an openness to the discussion of values that were of national significance in areas other than culture. In 1996 the polling organisation MORI reported on the findings of a survey designed to assess the degree of public agreement of a series of value statements developed by the National Forum for Values in Education and the Community. The Forum was made up of 150 members from schools, professional bodies and stakeholders with some responsibilities for young people and their aim was to see to what extent there were values and behaviours that reflected a consensus of values in the nation and which schools could legitimately promote 'on society's behalf' (SCAA, 1996). The Forum drafted a statement, divided into four sections: the self, relationships, society and the environment. Members of the Forum agreed that there were common values in a plural society (Talbot, 2000) and Mori reported that 85–75% of the people who responded agreed with them. Looking at these values now, they appear in stark contrast to the national values outlined as fundamental British values. Not only are the statements of values produced by the National Forum broad, they range over a wider field of human activity and most striking of all they acknowledge difference (Ainsworth & Johnson, 2000). The preamble to the statement of values in the National Curriculum stresses that these values are a mirror of values that already exist in society; they reflect an already existing consensus and it is not the role of educators to enforce them but it is up to schools to decide, reflecting the range of views in the wider community, how these values should be interpreted and applied (DfES, 2004, p. 219). This is an understanding of national values that seeks to build consensus and is wary of insisting on absolutes or moral exclusivity. It was also one of the last times that a commitment to multicultural values would be presented positively in education.



The approach to national values in education was informed by two distinct themes. The first was a belief that the development of a coherent and defined set of national values would underpin the revitalisation of British society, a view that underpinned several initiatives in this period. *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* was a report commissioned by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in 1999 and was part of a raft of documents designed by Labour to inform their new vision for education. The report coincided with a review of the National Curriculum and was chaired by Ken Robinson. *All Our Futures* is filled with quotes from artists and celebrities all making the case for a balance in education, between national priorities around literacy and numeracy and releasing the creative and cultural potential of the young. In Section 3 of the report the authors explore the different ways in which the idea of culture can be understood. It goes on to explain that cultures, as a way of life are associated with values and patterns of behaviour and that Britain is characterised by not one culture but by many, ‘an extraordinary variety of different cultural communities’ (p. 52). It mocks the idea that values are unchanging, stating that the headline in a nation newspaper that claimed ‘times change but values don’t’ is wrong because ‘the opposite is true’ (p. 54). The report does, however, identify two values which are unchanging and which it claims underpin ‘our national culture’ (NACCCE, 1999). The first value is a commitment to the ‘unique value and central importance of the individual’. This commitment to the individual is the cornerstone of a raft of legal and political principles as well as underpinning the belief in the right of individuals to be creative, to find personal fulfilment and self-realisation. The second ‘touchstone of our national culture’ identifies the idea of contingency, ‘the view that things

may be different from how they seem or are currently believed to be'. The report goes on to explain that it is contingency that has fuelled and shaped the way we have engaged with the sciences and the humanities from philosophy to history. Both values would be out of place in the current definition of Britishness but at the time they reflected the relationship between national values and the project to revive Britain's position on the world stage.

For Gordon Brown the need to articulate and define Britishness was always linked to the belief that a zeitgeist of decline and loss of national confidence underpinned Britain's loss of national dynamism and international prestige. As Chancellor of the Exchequer he addressed the British Council and argued that as a nation the British were accustomed to a sense of decline, a sense that is rooted in the end of empire, of failed corporatism and a British identity that was defined by race and ethnicity and the 'cricket test' (Brown, 2004). Identifying British values would be the precursor to reclaiming a national sense of confidence. One of Brown's first acts on becoming Prime Minister was the publication of *The Governance of Britain*, which promised to articulate a 'new constitutional settlement', including a way of understanding what it means to be British and a commitment to 'initiate an inclusive process of national debate to develop a British statement of values' (2007, p. 8). In Section 4 of the report there is a lengthy discussion of the nature of identity and citizenship. It acknowledges that unlike in America or Canada the sense of national identity is ambiguous and there is a lack of precision about what we mean to be British (p. 54). The result of this pledge was *Citizenship: Our Common Bond*. Schools were to be proactive in forging links with stakeholders so pupils could participate in their communities, students were to prepare portfolios of their citizenship work and it recommended that all young people should be involved in

citizenship ceremonies. There were also proposals to enhance 'our national narrative' through utilising 'a rich suite of national symbols', the production of a 'non-legalistic statement of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship' and the introduction of a National Day to coincide with the Olympics and Diamond Jubilee (p. 7). The preoccupation with national identity was fuelled by the belief that commitment to a set of values would enhance national performance.

The second theme was a growing belief that previous commitment to diversity in the form of multiculturalism was responsible for the lack of social cohesion. The commitment to a form of national identity that moved away from plural ideas of belonging and which framed the discussion in political language was clearly articulated in the Crick Report published in 1998. The Report of the Advisory Group on Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Citizenship in Schools (the Crick Report) prompted a model of Citizenship Education that sought to address what it saw as dangerous levels of political apathy. While the Crick Report did not propose an explicit set of national British values, it did articulate a model of citizenship that assumed a particular understanding of national identity. Although Crick recognises that Britain is a plural society, the report insists on a uniform understanding of moral values and social development as a precondition to the development for citizenship (Olssen, 2004). In her analysis of the way the report engages with issues of difference and equality, Audrey Osler notes that it stresses the importance of a common national identity but that some sections have a decidedly 'colonial flavour' (2000, p. 30). The report talks about 'our' minorities and precludes any possibility of hybrid identities. The result is that an authentic national identity, one which is the desired outcome of Citizenship Education, is assumed to be mono cultural and assimilationist. Minority communities were positioned as

outside the national norm and Citizenship Education was criticised for failing to recognise that alternative or plural identities could also be British. The Crick report may claim to embody inclusive values but the reality is that when the Report discusses cultural diversity ‘it falls into the trap of presenting certain ethnicities as “other”’ (Osler & Starkey, 2001, p. 292).

In the Ajegbo et al. (2007) the representation of values and national identity is brought full circle so that cultural expressions of Britishness are framed entirely within a political discourse. Commissioned as a response to debates over the nature of national identity and security concerns about radicalisation and ‘home grown terrorism’, it was foregrounded by a growing consensus that multiculturalism was in part responsible for the current crisis. The report approaches the definition of Britishness with caution, it acknowledges that defining Britishness could be ‘divisive’ and that a ‘more contextualised’ understanding might be more useful than one that is based on ‘abstract notions of “Britishness”’ (Ajegbo et al., 2007). It criticised the values provided by the *National Forum for Values in Education and the Community* as too watered down, and concludes that core values should include free speech, the Rule of Law, mutual tolerance and respect for equal rights. The impact of the Ajegbo Report was evident in revisions made to the Citizenship National Curriculum programme of study for England (QCA, 2007) where there was a greater emphasis on community and social cohesion (Jerome & Clemitshaw, 2012). The combination of calls for a more defined sense of Britishness, centred on liberal values within a discourse that dwells on the perceived dangers of social fragmentation, contributed to a climate where a plurality of views and identity is seen as problematic. Britishness defined by liberal markers is

therefore seen as the identity through which all other identities are ranked and organised.

Fundamental British values appear as the endpoint in an emergent narrative of civic values in British values in education. As we have seen that narrative has been shaped by a growing political consensus that a plurality of values is problematic and that an absence of social cohesion is the product of an absence of core values. The evolution of a civics discourse in national values is even more dramatic if it is compared with the ways in which Britishness was identified through education at the turn of the 20th century. When the nature of fundamental British values is compared to past definitions of Britishness in classrooms, it is clear that not only were there different notions of Britishness but that in many ways fundamental British values represent a radical departure not just in the way they privilege political values over culture but in the nature of the values themselves.

#### BRITISH VALUES, EDUCATION AND EMPIRE

In 1932 Miss Beryl Aylward was dismissed from her school in Coventry because she refused to salute the flag on Empire Day. In her defence she stated that because she was a Quaker 'she held the glorification of one's own country to be not conducive to international good will' (Russell, 1932). The values of the Empire summed up by the motto of the Empire Day Movement 'Responsibility, Duty, Sympathy and Self Sacrifice' were celebrated through Empire Day pageants that, while repulsive to Miss Beryl Aylward, expressed Britishness to the thousands of school children who took part every year on the 24th of May between 1904 and 1958.

Epitomised through Empire Day celebrations, British values were Christian, white and patriotic (Cesarani & Fulbrook,

1996; Mackenzie, 1986). Many civics primers in the 1920s invited students to look admiringly at the extent of the Empire. The English were often referred to as a 'race', and the author of *Far and Near Geographical Series* advised teachers when teaching geography to 'think imperially' (Starr, 1929). Thinking imperially meant emphasising the benefits of Empire to the countries ruled by Britain and extolling the duties of Britons to their subjects. *Teacher's World*, the mostly widely read post-World War I teachers' paper regularly ran special features providing teachers with tips and resources to be used on Empire Day. The 1926 edition for *Empire Day* was typical in offering both a play for Empire and *A Song of Empire*. Children would pretend to be subjects of the Empire, dress in costume, paint their faces with black face paint and then parade in front of a child selected to be Britannia for the day.

As it was conveyed through Empire Day celebrations, the racialised and supremacist character of Britishness is offensive and bizarre to contemporary ears. The aggressive racism is repulsive, but it is also the arrogance and confidence of the mood of Empire Days that astonishes. This was the period when Victorian society was at its most confident, when notions of popular imperialism were established and when many of the traditions we associate with Englishness were invented (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012). As such the themes that underpinned Britishness were explicit and politically triumphant.

The celebration of Empire Day in schools across the nation continued until 1958 when it was renamed Commonwealth Day, but these celebrations of nationalism in schools were not typical of the way Britishness has historically been conveyed. A peculiarity of British national identity is that unlike many other nations, until the introduction of Citizenship Education in 2002, civic education that made

national values explicit, the fostering of Britishness was implicit (Sears, Davies, & Reid, 2011). The post-war period is characterised by an absence of policy or practice that explicitly promoted Britishness either through civic values or otherwise (Keating, 2011). The absence of a tradition in English schools of civic or citizenship education (Kerr, 1999) means that the task of identifying British values in education is less straightforward, but it is possible to identify a sense of nationhood through the way key policies or specific subjects were positioned as representative of a national character.

#### 1944 — A 'GENTLE PATRIOTISM'

The discussions that surround the development and execution of the 1944 Education Act provide an insight into the way education was expected to contribute to a national vision (Ranson, 1988). The 1944 Education Act is sometimes presented as the culmination of the people's peace, part of a new relationship between the state and the people that would herald equality and an end to elitism (Simon, 1986). In reality the 1944 Act was a compromise between competing visions of education and values (McCulloch, 1997). In part this was reflected in the different models for post-war education promoted by Spens and Norwood and their competing definitions of what it meant to be educated in the 'English tradition' (McCulloch, 1997). The Association for Education in Citizenship was founded in 1935 and was a reflection of an interest in the relationship between schooling and democracy but ultimately it was decided that national values should be promoted implicitly (Freathy, 2008). The civic dimension of the 1944 Act was implicit, in that the act itself was conceived as a civic project (McCulloch, 1994) and part of a

wider project post-war reconstruction that some saw as the new Jerusalem (Blatchford, 2014).

In the wake of what Hobsbawm called the ‘Age of Catastrophe’ (Hobsbawm, 1994), a prolonged period of economic depression, open hostility between the classes and a world war, education was recast as the heart of a new Britishness (Simon, 2000). In his analysis of the debates that informed the approach to ideas of citizenship, Freathy argues in part that the new discourse on national identity and citizenship was also informed and shaped by a more dynamic understanding of what it meant to be a citizen (Freathy, 2008). The notion of citizenship that emerged was free from the jingoism of Empire and war, committed to parliamentary democracy and ready to stand up against tyranny (Jones, 1982). This was a ‘gentle patriotism’, whose imagery and iconography centred not on the political ideals of Empire and domination but on cultural symbols and dispositions of Englishness. It was also one cultivated through education in the guise of the promotion of English literature as the academic and curriculum subject best suited to the cultivation of national character (Doyle, 1989) and the creation of English heroes and heroines whose lives populated history and English textbooks (May, 1995).

#### CULTURAL RESTORATIONIST VIEWS OF THE CURRICULUM

A new approach to national identity, informed by conservative and neo-liberal concerns, dominated debates over the direction of education from the mid-1980s (Whitty, Power, & Halpin, 1998). The concerns of what are sometimes called the ‘new right’ were informed by a sense that it was time to challenge the post-war consensus around welfare and to re-



envison traditional forms of authority and national culture (Furlong et al., 2000). Stephen Ball has described how this process worked its way through a series of reforms and policy developments as well as the curriculum in what he calls 'cultural restorationism'. Cultural restorationism is defined as a new right agenda, driven by the need to establish the authority of the state tying together the language of the family, the past and education (Ball, 1994). This is a process whereby the commodification of culture serves new right nationalist ends, and Britishness is recast once again, but this time through the positioning of the curriculum as both the battleground for a war of cultures and where markers of national and ethnic identity were established.

The restorationist agenda sought to transform curriculum subjects so they could be used to establish a single national voice, one that reclaimed a glorious past, cast Britain as a world power and made all ethnic, racial and cultural differences invisible. In English, the task of the restorationists was to 'depluralise' text so that literature became the 'articulation of a classless and monolithic society with a common, transcendent culture' (Ball, 1994, p. 7). Speaking at the Conservative Party Conference in 1988 Kenneth Baker, Minister for Education spoke with passion about the need for the teaching of history to communicate all the things children should be able to take pride in, including the spread of Britain's influence for good throughout the Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the civilising mission of Britain and the transformation of the world through the Industrial Revolution (Baker, 1988). Reflecting on the tone of the debate about the role of history as a national curriculum subject, the historian Raphael Samuel noted that for many restorationists their vision of belonging was 'almost tribal' 'in which the English, if not the British, are conceived of as a hereditary race' (Samuel, 2003, p. 85).

In 1995, Nick Tate, then chief executive of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) argued that the development of national identity was the business of the curriculum. Famously at a conference organised by SCAA the following year, Tate opened with a speech that identified five ‘big ideas’ for education. For many in education Tate’s longing for a return to a time when pupils were versed in the classics and were instilled with an appreciation of ‘high culture’ represented a backward, nostalgic understanding of national identity; with its clear echoes of Mathew Arnold, this was a vision of Britishness that was out of place in a plural, multi-cultural and postmodern world (Crawford & Jones, 1998). Tate’s intervention was significant though for other reasons. It marked a turning point in the debates about national identity and education — in part it was the last rallying cry of a Conservative government seeking to establish a sense of authority (Storry & Childs, 2002) and in this sense it represented a break with the notions of Britishness that were to come. Of more significance was the fact that Tate’s call for children to be taught Britishness was informed by his belief that Britishness had been weakened by a generation of multiculturalism policies and practices in schools and popular culture (Storry & Childs, 2002).

## CONCLUSION

A peculiarity of national identity in Britain is that because the nature and values associated with Britishness were assumed and taken for granted by earlier historians and researchers for much of the 20th century it is difficult to construct a timeline of how Britishness was understood before 1979 (Heath and Roberts). What is more clear is that in education the values considered to be British repeatedly change depending

on the social context and the government of the day and that a key change has been the framing of Britishness and national identity in the language of civics and political values in place of a past framing that emphasised cultural motifs. The context underpinning the development of fundamental British values is a fear of radicalisation facilitated by diversity and a rejection of liberalism. Fundamental British values as they appear in policy and resources, however, present a Britishness that is static and ahistorical, articulated in the language of political liberalism but framed by a securitised agenda.

The next chapter will explore the factors that have contributed to the reformulation of British values as political values and situate an understanding of fundamental British values within a new discourse of ‘othering’ and difference.