



**Education Committee Meeting
2nd December 2014**

Item 7: Core Values Underlying British Identity

In church schools Christian values should be written through the school as if through a stick of rock. The values which our schools endorse are those of:

- Reverence
- Wisdom
- Thankfulness
- Humility
- Endurance
- Service
- Compassion
- Trust
- Peace
- Forgiveness
- Friendship
- Justice
- Hope
- Creation
- Koinonia

More details about all of the values and how they might be taught are to be found on the National Society website. <http://www.christianvalues4schools.org.uk/>

Additional material demonstrating how values can underpin the whole curriculum can be found on the website of 'What If Learning'. <http://www.whatiflearning.co.uk/>

These values are ones that are shared by many people in this country because the Christian faith has for centuries been a driving force in our education and legal system and those values have made their mark on our history.

We are fortunate in that we live in a country where the majority of people care about the wellbeing of others, where injustice and cruelty to others appals and where people can be stirred to be compassionate and generous in their support for a good cause.

These characteristics have not come about by accident but through our history and experiences as a nation. Stubbornness, stoicism and resilience are also traits which as a nation we share but they have also been the vehicle for developing deeply held beliefs about the importance of freedom, justice and the rule of law.

It would be challenging to try and pin down how those characteristics have evolved and become part of our being and how over many years governments have tried to enshrine the ideas in law. A recent piece of legislation is the Equality Act.

The Equality Act 2010 has three aims:

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination
- to advance equality of opportunity
- to foster good relations between people

The values that matter and influence public decision making might be summed up by the following list:

1. No one is above the Law; the same rules apply to everyone whether rich or poor.
2. The Monarch is the Head of the Church and together with the House of Commons and the House of Lords they are the supreme authority.
3. Everyone has a right to be treated equally, belonging to a different race or religion should not make any difference. Everyone, whatever their race or religion, should deal with each other in a tolerant and open way.
4. People are allowed to speak freely and to hold their own opinions, even if they are eccentric, as long as no harm results to others.
5. People can buy and sell property, land or belongings, they can sign contracts and have them honoured, without fear of confiscation by the state or other people.
6. Encouragement is given to people to volunteer and to set up organisations that explore the interests and needs of a community. They are able to work out for themselves the best way to operate within the law.
7. Children are helped to grow up happily in a loving, kind and disciplined environment by being part of a stable, loving family and wider community.
8. Learning about the achievements and mistakes of the past and valuing the rights and obligations that have gradually emerged out of the history of Britain.

Educational Suggestions

1. Introducing the concept of law through the development of rules which govern the school. Students, parents and staff agree the rules by which the school is to be run, the rationale for the rules and the sanctions which any failure to uphold will incur. Older students may discuss current cases that are in the press and explore the laws that will be used. 'Lord of the Flies,' by William Golding, for older students could be an interesting way into a discussion about a life without rules.
2. With younger children watching the Queen going to open Parliament can be a starting point for a discussion about how our democracy works and the role of the monarch. Older students could look at alternative models of government particularly in less well developed or newer countries. 'Animal Farm' by George

Orwell, for older students would provide an excellent starting point for a discussion on democracy and alternative styles of leadership.

3. Equality of opportunity should be demonstrated in the school systems so that students are confident that everyone in the school has access to what is available. Malorie Blackman's book, 'Noughts and Crosses', is a useful starting point for a discussion about segregation. Heroes of the past such as Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela have challenging stories. Para-Olympians and others provide evidence of how much, with the right support, people can achieve. RE should help to provide knowledge and understanding about what people believe and how their faith affects how they live.
4. The importance of free speech is a long held belief and is well illustrated by Speakers Corner in Hyde Park where anyone can go and address the crowd. Holding school debates and learning how to propose and oppose a motion in a polite but direct way is a useful skill for any student.
5. Learning about how business and commerce works and as students get older exploring how you manage a bank account, credit cards and interest rates, start a pension and get a mortgage are all valuable life skills which should be a part of a rounded education.
6. Naming some of the organisations it is possible to join from Brownies to Scouts, choirs, sporting clubs, faith group organisations. Discussing how they serve their community, what difference do they make, who started the organisation and why? Are there gaps in the provision, who do they think should fill those gaps, how could they do that? Are there charities it would be good to support and if so which ones and why? How do you decide?
7. PSHE should be beginning to address some of the issues around growing up healthy and well, in body, mind and spirit. Collective worship should provide a time for students to be reflective about their own lives and those about them. Families come in all shapes and sizes and the emphasis is on the care and love that they provide for the individuals in the family. The family may well include a the wider community and so learning to be part of that wider community in a safe way is also a critical part about growing up and learning to read the verbal and non-verbal signals that people give in order to remain safe. For younger children a film like 'Pollyanna' is a rather old, but very happy, film about a girl who loses her conventional family but builds a new family within the community.
8. Learning about the history of Britain and being able to make links and learn from the events of the past to understand the dilemmas and solutions for today's issues.

An example of why these values are important to our common life may be drawn from the following list of issues which make for general unrest:

- High levels of taxation
- Strict wage controls
- Workers controlled by tough legislation

- Foreign wars that appear pointless to much of the population
- Politicians that can seem out of touch and self-serving
- People feeling powerless and angry in the face of bureaucracy
- Radical preachers gaining ground with the disaffected
- A deadly disease spreading uncontrollably and the potential threat to our own country.

This is a description of England in 1381 and it would be foolish to ignore the lessons that moments in our history might teach us in this century.

One primary school in the diocese moved on from 'Black History Month' in October into a new season in November that they called 'Celebrating Britain'.

Such a celebration could include learning about:

- The Christian festivals of All Saints and All Souls,
- Parliament and the monarchy, religious divisions and tolerance, as part of Guy Fawkes Night;
- Remembrance Sunday and the sacrifice that people have made to safeguard freedom often marked by wearing a poppy,
- The Lord Mayor's show which marks the moment when the new Lord Mayor swears an oath of loyalty. The procession began in 1215, the same year as Magna Carta, which was an extremely significant moment in the history and constitution of this country. The show involves charities and the armed forces, together with those who volunteer to serve, as well as the City of London and its Livery Companies.
- Sikhs in our community will be celebrating Guru Nanak's birthday and as usual providing free food for the wider community. In Southall they will be joining with local churches to provide food for winter night shelters for the homeless.
- For many Christians the 5th Sunday before Christmas is 'Stir Up Sunday' when the Church of England Collect (prayer) for the day begins 'Stir up O Lord' and traditionally is the day when families made their Christmas Puddings and each took it in turn to stir the pudding. 'Stir up O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord'.
- The feast of St Andrew on November 30th who is one of our four patron saints. This day is also the birthday of Sir Winston Churchill.

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