

**9 February 2015****Agenda Item: 09****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION STANDARDS AND  
INCLUSION****THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S RESPONSE TO THE BRITISH VALUES  
AGENDA, INCLUDING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members with detailed information about the government's British Values agenda and changes to the Ofsted Inspection Framework, including the implications for schools and the Local Authority's response to these changes. Members are also asked to endorse the work undertaken by the LA in relation to this agenda.

**Information and Advice**

2. Following the government inquiry into the "Trojan Horse" affair, the summer months saw the governance of schools come under considerable attention and scrutiny. The Service Director for Education Standards and Inclusion reported on this inquiry to the Governors' Trust Board in 2014 and alerted representatives to the need for schools and the LA to pay particular attention to the key messages which came out of the inquiry. In September 2014, the Ofsted Inspection Framework and Handbook were revised and new emphasis was placed on the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects of the curriculum which has been described by the politicians as a need to actively promote "fundamental British Values". The British Values agenda attempts to translate previous legislation into real, meaningful practice which results in positive outcomes for young people.
3. On 7 January 2015, Lord Nash wrote to all the Chairs of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACRE) emphasising the importance of RE and indicating that SACRE has a key role in ensuring that schools are supported to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to British values. The letter acknowledged that in Birmingham "inappropriate religious education teaching and a distorted school ethos served to undermine those fundamental British values."
4. The "new" expectations are largely based on the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010. Ofsted, however, will now more closely scrutinise the work of schools in relation to equality and diversity, paying particular attention to the role governors play in promoting British Values. These have roughly been defined by government as:
  - tolerance
  - respect and understanding of those who are different from us
  - respect for the law and a belief in democracy
  - an understanding of what is right and wrong.

5. Many schools are still struggling to make sense of what they are required to do, yet as stated above, much of what Ofsted requires schools to demonstrate essentially is not new. Since 2010 schools have been required to tackle discrimination, victimisation and harassment, as well as promote positive relations between people. This agenda requires school leaders to actively translate policy into meaningful action and the expectation is that all settings, regardless of the context of the communities they serve, will embed equality and diversity into every aspect of their work. For governors and school leaders, this means they will need to ensure that the curriculum is indeed “broad and balanced” and that Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) values are embedded within the curriculum. They will need to continue to monitor the school’s response to all prejudice-based incidents, but will also now need to demonstrate that they are providing opportunities for their pupils to find out about and develop an interest in and respect for those who are different from themselves. Schools must tackle all forms of prejudice. Governors will need to ensure schools are appropriately resourced and staff are suitably trained to meet these demands, and will need to show that they are evaluating the impact of work undertaken in relation to British Values.
6. The expectation is that from early years right through to post-16, schools will be actively preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and will show vigilance in identifying any signs that British Values are being undermined. There must be prevention and detection of radicalisation and extremism. The LA, schools and other partners are consequently working closely together to ensure that there is effective communication and those potentially at risk from recruitment to such organisations are identified quickly and that appropriate intervention is put in place.
7. The behaviour and safety aspects of the Ofsted Framework require schools to be alert to specific cultural practices which are unlawful in the UK, such as Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation. There is also a clear message that schools must increase their efforts to tackle discriminatory and derogatory language, particularly in relation to that which is homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic in nature.
8. Several schools nationally have found themselves in difficulty for either not ensuring that their pupils are being adequately prepared for “life in modern Britain” or for not being vigilant enough to the signs of extremism and radicalisation. The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Education have made it clear that school leaders and governors need to take particular note of the British Values agenda. Local authorities have a key role to play in supporting schools to deliver on this agenda. In Nottinghamshire, this is mainly the remit of the Achievement and Equality Team (A&E), although a multi-agency steering group in partnership with the charity Stonewall has led on work on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) issues for the past two years.
9. Many Nottinghamshire schools have already an excellent track record in relation to this work. Initiatives over the years, supported by the Local Authority (LA), have resulted in schools being nationally recognised for their work on racism by Show Racism the Red Card and several schools and children’s centres have achieved the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard, which embodies much of what the British Values agenda is about. The A&E team has delivered extensive training to governors and school staff and those working in private, voluntary and independent (PVI) settings in respect of the Equality Act 2010, responding to racism, working with specific ethnic groups and faith communities. The team has also worked in partnership with the Holocaust Centre to deliver intervention

programmes in areas of the County known to have the highest reported levels of race hate crime. In addition, specific programmes aimed at raising the issues around race with children and young people have been developed and delivered in partnership with a number of schools. These programmes and training sessions have been delivered in both ethnically diverse and mainly white settings, and have resulted in practitioners being more confident in tackling sensitive subject matter in what are sometimes perceived as hostile or racially intolerant communities. Much of this work has been effectively targeted in such areas as a result of the data sharing by schools in relation to reported racist incidents. Although not all Nottinghamshire schools continue to submit reports to the LA, sufficient numbers do still choose to engage with the LA and consequently we have been able to target resources and intervention programmes where there is greatest need. Links with the Community Safety Team, Targeted Support and Youth Justice and the Police have all been essential in ensuring that schools are effectively supported to address these issues.

10. More recently, the LA has made considerable progress in relation to work on LGBT issues. The multi-agency steering group led two conferences in February 2014 for professionals built around the testimony of LGBT young people and their families. These were positively received and resulted in many Head Teacher delegates returning to their schools to champion this work. The group has been able to identify a number of settings which have demonstrated real commitment to improving outcomes for LGBT children and young people, in primary, secondary and special schools, maintained and academy. Building on this success and supported by funding from the Community Safety Initiatives Grant and the Hate Crime Strategy Group, the group has continued to encourage more schools to take on board this agenda. In the autumn term 2014, 800 primary and secondary pupils in the Ashfield and Gedling districts attended workshops on gender stereotyping and homophobia. Each school taking part has pledged to follow up the workshop in their respective settings and is willing to support other schools wishing to learn from their experiences. Similarly, a number of secondary and post-16 settings have accessed a bespoke LGBT Theatre in Education programme which is supported by staff training. It is anticipated that by the end of the financial year a further 2,000 students will have taken part in these workshops, which again have been informed by both national research and the experiences of local LGBT young people. In addition to these specific projects, several schools and governing bodies have accessed training on the issues as well as free resources which have been distributed on request to Nottinghamshire schools and youth centres. As a consequence of the LA's efforts, in July 2014 Nottinghamshire was awarded the "Most Improved" accolade in the Stonewall Education Equality Index, jumping more than 20 places on the previous year's entry. Our work has also resulted in Nottinghamshire being asked to be part of a two year, fully-funded pilot alongside four other Stonewall Education Champion LAs.
11. In responding to the changes to the Ofsted Inspection Framework, the LA has taken, or is planning, the following action:-
  - provided input at the autumn term Head Teacher briefings so that school leaders are conversant with the changes and the action they must take
  - briefed the Clerks to Governing Bodies to ensure they are alert to the responsibilities of governing bodies in relation to this agenda
  - issued a Director's Report and published an article in the Governors' Newsletter detailing the actions governors must take
  - developed bespoke training for school staff and governing bodies

- established a firm working partnership with the Nottinghamshire Police Prevent Team and enabled some schools to access the bespoke training offered around extremism and radicalisation
  - identified key staff to be part of a multi-disciplinary working group, to include representatives from Legal Services, Human Resources, Youth Justice Service, Youth Service and School Improvement, to ensure that LA guidance and advice to schools in relation to this agenda is consistent and robust, and to ensure that schools are clear about referral thresholds and pathways so that the most vulnerable young people are quickly identified and supported in relation to extremism and potential radicalisation
  - revised the guidance for schools in relation to the reporting and management of prejudice-based incidents/bullying
  - established links with the newly formed City and County Female Genital Mutilation Board, in order to ensure access to appropriate training and guidance for schools in the County
  - undertaken joint work with the Youth Service to develop new resource materials and training which help schools balance the negative media coverage of certain communities and faith groups with positive news/contributions. In the main, this will focus on countering the growing anti-Islamic prejudice which is evident in some communities
  - undertaken joint work with Children's Centre leads to ensure staff in these settings are also conversant with the British values agenda
  - launched the "Notts Says No to Prejudice" competition and showcase as a way of encouraging schools to focus their attention on tackling derogatory and discriminatory language/behaviour, and sharing best practice across settings
  - developing a suite of "Toolkits" which offer schools guidance around LGBT issues and other equality strands
  - organising a "British Values" conference for schools to provide further guidance and practical support around how to deliver effectively on this agenda
  - providing a workshop at the forthcoming Governors' Conference.
12. Although generally the majority of young people across Nottinghamshire are comparatively free from entrenched prejudice-based views, there are some localities which are subject to certain racial tensions. Certain parts of Nottinghamshire have seen a significant change in demographics in recent years, with new arrivals from across the globe migrating to the area, mainly for the purposes of work or study. As austerity measures have begun to impact on many of these communities, the perception of some local residents is that migration, particularly from Eastern Europe, is a root cause of many of the difficulties some families experience. Similarly, local, national and international news stories in recent months have fuelled anti-Islamic feeling in some areas.
13. There is also growing evidence from some Nottinghamshire schools that some parents/carers are openly expressing anti-Islamic views and requests to withdraw children from lessons on Islam have increased in recent months. There is also growing evidence that some extremist groups are using social media to stir up tensions and propagate fears around immigration. As such, it is essential that the LA works with partners and schools to quickly identify students vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups.

## **Other Options Considered**

14. The Council is required by current legislation to promote tolerance and democratic values. The report is a description of work undertaken to fulfil these duties. No other option has been considered.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

15. Since the revision of the Ofsted Inspection Framework a number of schools across the country, some of which were previously graded 'Outstanding', have been subsequently graded as 'Requiring Improvement' or 'Inadequate' for failure to adequately promote British Values or to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. The LA therefore needs to be proactive in ensuring all schools, governing bodies and LA staff are aware of the revised expectations and that they are actively promoting British Values.
16. Nottinghamshire LA has been anticipating an inspection of Children's Services for several months and it is highly probable that inspectors will make enquiries about the LA's efforts to support schools to protect young people from radicalisation and extremism. They are also likely to seek evidence around the LA's actions to tackle derogatory and discriminatory language in schools, particularly in relation to homophobic language.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

17. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

18. Many of the changes in the Ofsted Inspection Framework require schools to be mindful of and vigilant to signs of radicalisation and extremism amongst young people. The work of the LA to support schools both in identifying those at risk, and in securing appropriate support and intervention for any such individuals, will help reduce the risk of young people in Nottinghamshire becoming involved in terrorist and extremist activity. Similarly, work to prevent and reduce hate crime will also be vital as young people generally are the main perpetrators of such incidents.

### **Human Resources Implications**

19. Work with HR is underway to ensure that the Safeguarding Induction checklist for school staff and governors reflects the changes introduced by Ofsted in September. In ensuring that school staff and governors understand their responsibilities in relation to the Code of Conduct and The Equality Act 2010. The LA will also be supporting governors in fulfilling their duties as employers and service providers.

### **Human Rights Implications**

20. This work supports many of the articles detailed in the UN Convention on Human Rights in that fundamental British values are defined as a belief in democracy; free press; mutual respect; tolerance and acceptance of different faiths and cultures; and a respect for the law. Schools are required to proactively promote these values and protect pupils from any activity/being involved in any activity which may undermine an individual's human rights.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty implications**

21. The British Values agenda supports the general duties of the PSED in that Ofsted will require clear evidence that schools are tackling discriminatory and derogatory language and behaviour, and are actively promoting respect and tolerance for people from different faith and cultural backgrounds. This supports the duty to eliminate unlawful victimisation, harassment and discrimination, as well as the duty to foster positive relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications**

22. There are a number of specific references in the revised Ofsted Inspection Framework and Grade descriptors which relate to a range of safeguarding concerns. These include the responsibility of schools to:-
- effectively tackle prejudice-based incidents/bullying and the use of derogatory and discriminatory language/behaviour
  - be vigilant about and recognise the signs that young people are becoming radicalised or exposed to extremism
  - recognise the signs of and know how to access appropriate services in relation to child sexual exploitation; forced marriage; female genital mutilation and gang activity.

### **Implications for Service Users**

23. The increased focus on Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects of the curriculum will benefit all pupils, parents/carers and members of staff who have a protected characteristic, are perceived to have a protected characteristic, or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. The emphasis on preparing pupils for life in modern Britain is intended to result in positive outcomes for all children and young people.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That:

- 1) the detailed information about the government's British Values agenda and changes to the Ofsted Inspection Framework, including the implications for schools and the Local Authority's response to these changes, be noted
- 2) Members endorse the work undertaken by the Local Authority in relation to this agenda.

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### **Constitutional Comments (SMG 19/01/15)**

24. The proposals in this report fall within the remit of this Committee.

### **Financial Comments (SS 19/01/15)**

25. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Report into the allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the “Trojan Horse” letter  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/birmingham-schools-education-commissioners-report](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/birmingham-schools-education-commissioners-report)

Promoting Fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (Departmental advice for maintained schools)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-sm-sc>

Ofsted Inspection Framework (Revised September 2014)

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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