

How do practitioners in early years provision promote Fundamental British Values?

In 2015 the United Kingdom government harnessed early childhood education and care (ECEC) providers to its anti-terrorism strategy by placing them within the scope of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Great Britain Parliament, 2015). They became subject to the 'Prevent Duty' which requires them to have due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. However, the promotion of Fundamental British Values (FBV), as a specific measure to prevent young children being drawn into terrorism, has raised questions about the role of the ECEC sector as an instrument of counter terrorism policy. This paper analyses the ways in which early childhood practitioners mediated the requirement to promote FBV through their pedagogical practice. Although practitioners are commissioned to mediate specific values formulated in the political arena (Eirnarsdottir et al, 2015) their response was complex and multi layered. Whilst a public display of compliance to FBV was performative (Butler, 1997) values education was an everyday pedagogical practice unconstrained by the instituted definitions of FBV. Practitioners deployed a contextual moral pedagogy (Basourakos, 1999) where children construct understandings of moral values and practices characterised by rich democratic dialogues.

Keywords: early childhood education and care, counter terrorism, values education, Fundamental British Values, moral pedagogy

Introduction

Recent tragic events in 2017 in the United Kingdom (UK) including, for example, the attacks and subsequent loss of human life at Westminster Bridge in London and the Ariana Grande Concert in Manchester have brought to the forefront of public debate the issue of national security and the efficacy of the UK government's policy response to terrorism. McKendrick and Finch (2016) argue that this policy response is situated within the global narrative of a 'war on terror' and that there is a prevailing approach of strategies associated with securitisation across a range of children and family policy in the UK. Policy development and its subsequent implementation in practice within the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector in the UK is not developed outside 'real life' (Baldock, Fitzgerald and Kay, 2013, 34) but is shaped by, and integral to, a socio-cultural context with an increased emphasis on national security. In this way ECEC policy and debates surrounding policy can be viewed as a 'sociocultural mirror' (New, 2009, 309). This paper reports research conducted in 2017 exploring the intersection of ECEC policy with the evolving policy arena concerned with national security in the UK. Specifically, the way in which the new requirement to promote a pre-determined set of Fundamental British Values (FBV) (HMG, 2015) as a specific measure to counter terrorism has been mediated by ECEC practitioners in their pedagogical practice in England. This paper reports on a small qualitative study which aims to build on knowledge from past studies exploring the intersection of counter terrorism policy and teacher education (e.g. Smith, 2016) or statutory school age provision (e.g. Maylor, 2016 ; Panjwani, 2016) through its focus on ECEC.

The following research questions guided this inquiry:

- How do practitioners in ECEC provision mediate the statutory duty to promote FBV in their leadership of pedagogy?
- How have practitioners interpreted FBV?

- How are FBV situated within the broader pedagogy of values education in ECEC provision?

The paper begins by contextualising the intersection of counter terrorism and ECEC policy; this is followed by a critique of FBV and an exploration of theoretical perspectives on moral pedagogies and values education. A critical reflection on methodological issues arising in the study follows. The paper ends with a discussion of findings emerging from the data analysis and concluding reflections on the research questions.

The intersection of Counter Terrorism and Early Childhood Education and Care Policy

The initial United Kingdom (UK) government policy response to the phenomena of terrorism appeared in 2003 and was referred to as CONTEST (HM Government, 2011); this formed an overarching policy to counter terrorism. From this policy a strategy of countering terrorism by preventing extremism was first introduced following the July 2005 attacks in London (Home Office, 2005) and went through a further iteration in 2008 (HM Government, 2008). During this period the policy of preventing extremism was questioned and critiqued because of its focus on Muslims and Islam (Griffith-Dickson, Dickson and Ivermess, 2015; Panjwani, 2016) and for the absence of any consideration of other potential causes of extremism such as far right political beliefs or foreign policy. Furthermore the socio-cultural context for policy was informed by the representation of terrorism and terrorists in the media and government publications reinforcing a stereotypical view that terrorism is located in Muslim communities (Hickman et al, 2011 cited in Coppock, 2014). In 2011 the UK government published the Prevent Strategy that included two strategic objectives; the first being to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and the second to work with sectors where there are risks of radicalisation (HM Government, 2015). Panjwani (2016) argues that the policy response to terrorism had gradually shifted from a reactive to a preventative approach and this evolution

placed increased emphasis on work with communities. However, the extent of the work expected from early childhood, social care and community development practitioners working within communities remained ambiguous until the two strategic objectives set out above were incorporated in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Great Britain Parliament, 2015). S.26¹ of this Act requires specified authorities or those providing publicly funded provision including registered early years childcare provision to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This imposed a political agenda of securitisation onto practitioners and those working directly with children (Lander, 2016).

Fundamental British Values – a critical perspective

The statutory guidance to support the implementation of the Prevent Duty stated that ECEC provision receiving early education funding, and therefore registered early years childcare providers must promote fundamental British values. The values are defined as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs (HMG, 2015). Exploring the status and implementation of Fundamental British Values (FBV) in ECEC practice contexts is central to this study. The ECEC sector was brought within the scope of the government's counter-terrorism strategy (Anonymous, 2015) and practitioners working within registered early years childcare provision are constituted, in the same way as teachers in schools, as subjects of counter-terrorism policy (Farrell, 2016). The Prevent Duty statutory guidance stated that failure to promote FBV in ECEC provision may lead to local authorities withdrawing early education funding (HMG, 2015). Similarly the regulatory framework in England requires the inspectors of registered

¹ Hereafter referred to as the Prevent Duty.

early years childcare providers to consider how British values are promoted in the provision as part of their judgement on leadership and management (Ofsted, 2015 [updated, 2017]). Regulation in this context can be considered as a practice of surveillance (Foucault, 1984) that potentially limits ECEC practitioners' reflection on the relevance of FBV in their practice.

Recent studies have identified FBV, as defined by the statutory guidance for the Prevent Duty (HMG, 2015), as problematic. For example, Lander (2016) questions if the values can be claimed as uniquely British and this brings into question whether FBV may be interpreted as an expression of nationalism (Soutphommansane, 2012) rather than a statement of values that are shared by and characteristics of humanity. Similarly, Maylor (2016) questions whether only British values are considered as acceptable. At a conceptual level this emphasis on Britishness may limit dialogues that explore, for example, democracy or liberty as values shared across families of diverse heritage. There is an assumption in the Prevent Duty that FBV are shared by all citizens (Lander, 2016) and therefore, the requirement to promote FBV in ECEC contexts can be interpreted as an imposition rather than an exploration of values. Furthermore, Starkey (2015) argues that FBV are not absolute and have to be complemented and qualified by other values. He suggests that it is not possible to consider the rule of law without reflecting on justice and, similarly, any consideration of tolerance is enhanced by reflecting on inclusion or belonging. I suggest that the restriction of FBV to a prescribed set of values (HMG, 2015) has the potential to inhibit ECEC practitioners' consideration of broader values such as hope or justice.

As a piece of statutory guidance implementing primary legislation in the UK, the Prevent Duty includes a definition of FBV but makes no reference to human rights and omits any acknowledgement of the UK's commitments to international human rights treaties (Struthers, 2016). This is problematic given the significance of the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child (OHCHR, 1989) and General Comment No 7 (OHCHR, 2005) in shaping the ECEC sector's understanding of young children's right to have their views and ideas respected in matters that affect him or her (MacNaughton, 2007a). Similarly Article 17 of the UNCRC (OHCHR, 1989) places an expectation on governments to ensure that children have access to information related to range of issues including their moral well-being. I suggest that the imposition of an abstract set of FBV not contextualised within early childhood is problematic in ensuring their accessibility and relevance to young children. The implication arising from the UNCRC is that a child's views should be actively sought and enacted by government through legislation, policy and practice. In this way children are considered as social actors and 'active citizens who can participate actively in public decision making.' (MacNaughton, 2007b, p.465). The absence of recognition on the part of the UK government that children may have views about the relevance of FBV to their lives potentially undermines both their citizenship and their rights.

Values Education in ECEC

Values are 'guiding principles in life' (Schwartz, 2012,17) and in this way they serve as standards or criteria on which humans select or evaluate actions, policies and events (Halstead and Taylor, 2000). They form the basis of moral judgements in deciding what is good or bad, appropriate or inappropriate and legitimate or unjustifiable. In reflecting on inclusive education Booth (2005) argues for the central role of values in developing practice and the significance of practitioners both understanding and giving visibility to the values that underpin their actions. Viewed through the post-modern lens, understandings of values may shift in the constant search for authoritative sources and the quest to evaluate their trustworthiness (Bauman, 1993). This raises questions about the ways in which ECEC

practitioners navigate the tensions and ambiguities that may arise in promoting FBV within their domain of practice.

The focus on values in ECEC pre-dates the introduction of the Prevent Duty and the requirement to promote FBV in the UK. International organisations advocating for the development of ECEC policy and practice emphasise the significance of values; UNESCO (2000) claims that the ‘value orientations of children are largely determined by the time they reach the age of formal schooling’ (2) and therefore state governments need to create a ‘value based environment’ (4) in early childhood contexts together with a child-centred values education programme free from political, social or religious abuse. This raises the question about the extent to which the policy of promoting FBV in ECEC can be separated from the political context of measures to address counter terrorism or considered by the UK government as a values education programme. More recently Osler (2015) and UNESCO (2015) emphasised the centrality of values in developing understandings of citizenship particularly the values of fairness and social justice. Furthermore they suggest that developing an understanding of empathy and respect as shared values can contribute to a sense of belonging to a community and a common humanity. Such debates about the significance values education in ECEC extend beyond the UK government’s policy rationale of counter-terrorism.

Values education can be understood as an education practice through which children are assumed to learn values as well as the norms and skills reflected in those values (Halstead and Taylor, 2000). Thornberg (2016) emphasises that values education can be explicit where it is directed by the state through the curriculum and other policy texts or implicit in the sense that it is embedded within the practices in the ECEC provision. A debate pertinent to the policy of FBV is whether values should be ‘instilled’ in children or whether children should be taught ‘to explore and develop their own values’ (Halstead, 1996, 9). Similarly, Halstead

and Taylor (1996) urge reflection in research, policy and practice on both the ‘values in education’ and the pedagogy of ‘education in values’ (vii). Einarsdottir et al. (2015), drawing on earlier studies in the Nordic context, suggest that values education (as determined in national policy) are ‘societal directed goals for values and values education’ (99). They argue that practitioners are commissioned by state governments to mediate specific values that are formulated within the political arena. However, values also operate within the everyday pedagogical practices of ECEC provision (Emilson and Johansson, 2009) and this may be in parallel but also in tension to the formal values education set out in national policy. This raises the question of whether FBV as a set of explicit values formulated within the political arena are in tension with the values implicit within everyday pedagogical practices in ECEC provision in the UK.

Values are principles and ideals that enable the ‘evaluation of beliefs and actions’ (Halstead, 1999, 5). As a pedagogical practice values education mediates moral or political values to children (Thornberg, 2016). I suggest that theoretical perspectives on moral pedagogy may support an understanding of how FBV are mediated in early childhood pedagogy. Basourakos (1999) proposes a binary construct for a moral pedagogy. Within a conventional moral pedagogy, values are viewed as absolute and the role of the practitioner is to transmit explicit values to children. However, within a contextual moral pedagogy children are encouraged to construct their own understanding about moral values and practices. Such a view also acknowledges that values in ECEC provision are communicated through the social, cultural and material environment (Johansson et al. 2016). I suggest that FBVs are a pre-determined and explicit set of values within national policy that assume a conventional moral pedagogy within ECEC provision; they are not contextualised within the spaces occupied by children and practitioners. In a study in the Australian early childhood context Brownlee et al (2015) argue that moral pedagogies are more complex than

Basourakos' binary position; they suggest that there is a relationship between the epistemic beliefs of practitioners about how children learn and moral pedagogies. Practitioners operating within a contextual moral pedagogy reflect on their epistemic beliefs and view children as competent learners capable of theorising and constructing values. Through this lens, a contextual moral pedagogy has the potential to facilitate discursive spaces occupied by children and practitioners where values are formed and understood.

Methodological discussion

This study reported on in this paper was conducted within the interpretivist paradigm and explores the multiple understandings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) of FBV operating within a small sample of ECEC providers. My post-modern positioning as a researcher leads me to emphasise 'local, contextual studies' (Merrill and West, 2009, 192) that reveal the complexity within the research setting. The phenomenon under study, ECEC practitioners' interpretation of FBVs, was not separable from the context of ECEC provision so case study is a relevant research approach (Yin, 2003). This allowed the collection of data from multiple sources within each local context. Stake's (1995) notion of a collective case study where the same research questions can be applied in a number of different research settings provided the strategy with which to explore the range of interpretations of FBV in ECEC provision.

Inviting ECEC providers from within my existing network of contacts risked researcher bias. However, Holliday (2016) suggests qualitative researchers consider broad criteria when selecting research settings including the possibility of negotiating access and the potential to provide a variety of relevant interconnected data. Six ECEC providers located within an ethnically diverse city were invited to participate using a convenience approach to sampling (Leedy and Omrod, 2012). All research settings were registered early

years childcare providers and, as such, subject to the Prevent Duty and required to promote FBV. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is United Kingdom wide legislation, however, this study focuses on one city in England. In each ECEC provision three practitioners were invited to participate in the research giving eighteen adult participants in total. Participants' roles and job titles varied but they all held responsibility for leadership of pedagogy. Children (aged 2 to 4) were invited to share visual documentation emerging from their engagement in the curriculum. This was a purposive approach to sampling (Robson and McCartan, 2016) in that all participants' knowledge was of high relevance to the research questions.

Research conducted within the interpretivist paradigm is concerned with ethical relationships and the respectful representations of participants in research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). I reflected on the asymmetrical relationships of power between me as researcher and all participants throughout the project (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2015). After the study was given ethical clearance by the University's ethics committee all research settings the gatekeepers, ECEC practitioners and parents were informed of the research and their consent sought through documentation and meetings with the researcher. Children were verbally informed of the research by both the ECEC practitioners and the researcher and invited to give verbal assent to their work being included in the research project. This action acknowledged the possibility that children may decide not to participate and therefore dissent (Dockett et al, 2012). As the study is small scale, I adopted codes for the ECEC providers and pseudonyms for the participants to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Photographic images of children's work did not include any identifying features.

I planned semi-structured interviews where each ECEC practitioner could share their views; interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed by the researcher. A topic guide supported the dialogue with open questions inviting the participant to share their

pedagogy and experiences of FBV. In this sense, interviews were conceptualised ‘as negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents’ (Fontana and Frey, 2003, 90), where the participants would be free to introduce new topics and explore ideas through dialogue. However, interviews are formed and influenced by the contexts in which they take place (Alvesson, 2002). In five out of the six research settings practitioners stated a preference to be interviewed with a colleague because they understood the planning of pedagogy as a collaborative act. The semi-structured interview was subsequently extended by each participant leading me on a walking tour of their own workspace where they discussed the displays, resources and activities that related to FBV. The later resulted in dialogue that was shaped and enriched by the proximity to practice. In this way I attempted to counteract the potential domination arising from the power of my own position as researcher (Kvale, 2006).

In the design of the research I planned to review documentation that may provide insight into the ways that ECEC practitioners and children have interpreted FBV. Documents can be considered a rich source of data and need to be studied in relation to the social context (Punch, 2005); they are therefore a relevant data source within a case study. Furthermore, Stake (1995) argues that documents are valuable sources of data as the creators of the documents are more expert observers than the researcher. ECEC practitioners suggested a range of documents all co-constructed with children or constructed by children. This reflects the notion of values as socially constructed through the relations between children and between children and practitioners (Emilson and Johansson, 2009). The ownership of the documentation was with the children and their informed consent and assent was gained.

During the analysis of data my aim was to submit to themes that may emerge from the data (Holliday, 2016); this process involved taking the ‘corpus of raw data’ (transcripts and documents) and ‘searching for natural divisions’ from which themes might emerge (ibid, 99)

of how FBVs have been mediated in ECEC practice. During this process the dominance of the researcher's voice was regularly reviewed through 'member' checking (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014). The subsequent writing became a further stage in the analysis of data (Richardson and Adams St Pierre, 2005) as further connections and themes emerged through process.

Discussion of findings

The 'British' in FBV is problematic and complex

Leaders of ECEC practice were critical of the nationalistic focus within FBV and questioned the relevance of the emphasis on 'Britishness' to children, their families and the practitioners in the nursery. For example, one practitioner stated:

'I don't think some children and families would see themselves as British. If I go home and say to my Mum 'I am British.' She would say 'No you are not you are.....'. We have been given FBV as a tool to work with but a lot of people would question FBV because they would not see themselves as British.' Sandra, Provision B

This reflected the complexity of individual identities within the practitioner group. However, practitioners also commented on the diverse histories, nationalities and ethnicities of children and families in their provision who may not identify themselves as British. The relationship between Britishness and values was contested by practitioners. Whilst this resonated with the critical perspectives on FBV as 'uniquely British' (Lander, 2016) I found that practitioners' responses to FBV as a potential expression of nationalism were complex (Soutphommansane, 2012). Practitioners were critical in their approach to resources produced commercially to support ECEC providers in implementing FBV. For example, one reflected that:

'A lot of the resources we saw on line were posters that had a British flag on it. Our children are not from a British background and we did not want to display something

that did not belong to them. We did not want to display the flag. The posters had the Queen's face and how did that relate to the children?' Rebecca, Provision D.

Resources that included symbols of the Union Flag and the monarchy were considered by ECEC practitioners as patriotic and nationalistic; practitioners argued that they were decontextualized from children's lives and therefore irrelevant. Whilst the inappropriateness of the emphasis on a particular (or imposed view) of Britishness was a repeated theme emerging from the analysis data I found that providers had displays about FBV in the visual environment either in the reception area or a prominent place. Figures 1 and 2 are examples from one provision:

Figure 1. Display in reception area of Provision C.



Figure 2. Display in reception area of Provision C.



Practitioners principally referred to these displays about FBV in the context of regulation and the requirement to evidence that they were promoting British values to inform the inspector's judgement on leadership and management in the provision. Whilst the displays appeared to communicate how the provision was promoting FBV they were afforded low status by practitioners relative to other aspects of the visual environment that reflected the everyday practice with children or the views of children about values. The displays were part of a deliberate process of evidencing compliance; in this sense they can be considered as performative acts on the part of the practitioner (Butler, 1997 and Osgood, 2006) and reflect the power of surveillance in perpetuating and replicating FBV as a truth (Foucault, 1984). Similarly Farrell (2016), in an analysis of FBV, concluded that teachers are required to 'be surveilled in the truth game of Britishness' (14). Although practitioners were clear about the rationale for the displays that made an explicit public commitment to FBV this appeared to obscure any reflection on the way values are communicated through the material environment (Johansson et al. 2016) or the impact such displays may have in the ECEC provision. This was significant given that for some practitioners, families and children the Union flag and the monarchy may be considered as symbols of nationalism, oppression and power. By contrast, practitioners adopted a critical perspective regarding the selection of resources for the provision where there was an explicit strategy of avoiding symbols of nationalism.

Values education as an everyday pedagogical practice

Values education was embedded within the pedagogy; practitioners exemplified how the FBVs were implicit to the curricular and pedagogy. All providers engaged in shared planning of the curricular between adults, children and communities; this pedagogical practice known as 'Children's Planning Meetings' informed the weekly and daily plan. In two providers, practitioners had reflected on the ways in which they engaged children in an aspect

of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2017); specifically, the area of learning of 'Understanding the World' (ibid, 8) and the opportunities this afforded for values education. This resonates with Emilson and Johansson's (2009) perspective of values operating within the everyday pedagogical practices of ECEC provision. Through dialogues with children in planning meetings practitioners explored relationships between children, families and communities as 'Acts of Kindness' (Provision E and Provision F). This was rich in opportunities for values education as children conceptualised kindness by exploring its meaning in everyday lives through actions. The decision to focus on 'kindness' as a value was made by children as it was significant and relevant to their relationships; this was evident from the documentation emerging from the Children's Planning Meeting. Practitioners reflected that 'kindness' as a concept was accessible and meaningful to children.

Whilst 'kindness' is not one of the four FBVs practitioners suggested that FBVs were implicit in their pedagogical approach in this initiative. Two projects emerged from this planning process, the first 'Being Kind to Living Things' (Provision E), included children caring for plants and exploring the relationships between insect life, plant life and human life. In the second project, 'Kindness in the Community' (Provision F), children explored empathy and appreciation of diversity in the community. The children made small gifts as tokens of kindness which they subsequently shared with attendees of the Friday Prayers at the local mosque close to the ECEC provision. Practitioners cited this example of children learning about the FBV of mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs and of liberty. The documentation from the Children's Planning Meeting revealed that children were not constrained to a focus on faith and belief. They shared tokens of kindness with a wide range of people in the vicinity of the ECEC provision including homeless people they encountered each day. Here, values education is implicit (Thornberg, 2016) in a child

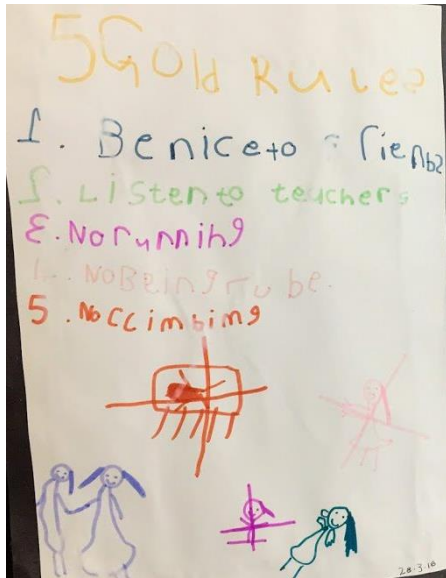
initiated activity and children's learning about values is contextualised with the social and cultural environment of the ECEC provision (Johansson et al. 2016).

Children's Planning Meetings were spaces for dialogue. Throughout all the research settings the visual record of the meetings were displayed as a way of validating and celebrating children's contribution to planning. Practitioners frequently stated that the planning meetings gave opportunities for children to learn about the FBV of democracy. They suggested that the planning meetings exemplified democratic relationships between children and also between children and adults. Such practices can be understood as 'lived democracy' (Eirnarsdottir et al, 2015, 104) where children's everyday experiences is a democratic process. This moves beyond the rhetorical commitment to democracy in the FBVs by applying democracy as a principle to guide relationships in ECEC provision. In this context values are explored through the pedagogy (Halstead, 1996) where the value of democracy is not imposed but examined and experienced by people in the provision.

Children's participation in governance, in terms of the development of policies and procedures, was a further example of a pedagogical practice that was rich in values education. Two of the ECEC providers (Provisions D and F) in the sample did not have access to outdoor spaces within their own premises. This led to creative approaches enabling children to engage with the community and the environment in the proximity of their provision; in these opportunities values education was implicit. In provision D children's participation in the governance processes was embedded as a pedagogical practice. For example, children developed risk assessments with adults for all activities that took place in the community. This repositioned the risk assessment beyond an act of governance to a pedagogical tool where children identified hazards and mitigating actions for both the

children and adults. Risk assessments were then communicated to children and adults through the visual displays in the provision (Figure 3).

Figure 3. A child's record and communication of the risk assessment for a walk into the community.



Adults and children afforded high status to the risk assessment activity. Practitioners viewed the practice of the risk assessment as an opportunity for children to explore the FBV of the rule of law through their engagement in governance; however, the practice was not constrained by this idea. Children's suggestions for mitigating risk reflected their active exploration of the wider values of care, respect and joy. Children's engagement in the governance of the ECEC provision emerged from matters of concern to them. For example, in Provision A children acted on a concern that parents were not respecting the boundaries relating to safety of all people in the ECEC provision. This resulted in a series of communications to parents/carers through posters including one reminding parents of the policy relating to peanuts (Figure 4).

Figure 4. A child's poster reminding parents of the policy relating to peanuts



Children were positioned by practitioners as social actors making meaning of their lives. In this way children become 'young citizens' (MacNaughton et al, 2007b) with an active role in both the governance and values education of the ECEC provision. Practitioners' reflections on their pedagogy demonstrated awareness of their epistemic beliefs where they viewed children as competent (Brownlee et al, 2015) in constructing values within the social context of the ECEC provision.

Values education constrained and unconstrained by FBV

Practitioners named pedagogical practices that enabled a focus on values education. For example, practitioners gave high status to Children's Planning Meetings; they reflected the richness of values education arising from children engagement. In this practice values education was implicit (Thornberg, 2016). In naming the values observed in children's planning meeting practitioners principally focused on those included within the four FBVs. However, my analysis revealed a range of values operating in children's planning meetings including for example, care, kindness, empathy, solidarity, respect and joy. This suggests that their pedagogy of implicit values education enabled children to explore values beyond FBVs; children' (Halstead, 1996). In this way children's engagement in values education is unconstrained by the narrow focus of FBVs. Practitioners appeared constrained to the four

FBVs when reflecting on the values emerging from their dialogues with children and they are subjected to the regime of truth (Foucault, 1980) of the FBVs embodied in the Prevent Duty. However, practitioners reflected that values education had always been part of their pedagogical practice, for example:

‘FBV are not asking us to do anything differently but bringing it out more. So do what you are doing but extending it more. They [values] are really important – what we are teaching the children will have an impact when they are older.’

Sandra, Provision B.

‘The values have always been here the focus on Fundamental British Values has made us more serious about them.’ Farah, Provision D.

Practitioners suggested that the requirement to promote FBV led to an increased focus on values education; this was a consistent theme emerging from the interview data. Seen in this way FBV can be understood as a facilitating factor by increasing awareness of values education in ECEC provision and prompting practitioners' to reflect on values education. Practitioners adopt a contextual moral pedagogy (Basourakos, 1999) where children are encouraged to construct their understanding of moral values and practices; however, the narrow focus of FBV may obscure from practitioners' view the richness of children's engagement with values.

Concluding reflection

ECEC provision can be considered as spaces where values are communicated in everyday pedagogical practices (Emilsson and Johansson, 2009) and values education is implicit to practice (Thornberg, 2016). My analysis reveals that leaders of pedagogy lifted to the foreground the four FBV in dialogues related to their practice; this resonates with Johansson's (2011) suggestion that values may be communicated consciously in ECEC provision.

Although the Prevent Duty required ECEC providers to promote FBVs in their work with

young children I found that the reality of values education went beyond this surface level compliance. Practitioners' engagement in FBV was performative (Butler, 1997). This performativity was visible in the public displays communicating an explicit commitment to and knowledge of FBV with a rationale of readiness for the statutory regulatory process. Such displays were afforded low status by practitioners relative to the pedagogical practice and engagement in children's learning which was rich in opportunities for values education, however, the narrow focus on the four FBV obscured from practitioners' view the breadth and depth of children's construction and understanding of values. Children's engagement with values was not constrained to the four FBVs and the documentation of their learning reflected, for example, the values of hope, compassion, care and solidarity. Practitioners sought to engage children in making meaning of FBV by adopting a contextual moral pedagogy (Basourakos, 1999) where children are viewed as competent and capable. By reflecting on their epistemic beliefs (Brownlee et al, 2015) practitioners positioned children as active agents in interpreting values within the context of the ECEC provision. Children unlike practitioners appeared unconstrained by the narrow focus on FBV.

Practitioners' engagement with FBV was complex; the performativity visible in the public displays of FBV can be interpreted as acts of compliance where practitioners did not always reflect on the ways in which particular expressions of Britishness or the symbols associated with national identity may affect children and families. The power of regulation as a practice of surveillance of FBV led practitioners to adopt parallel yet seemingly unconnected strategies. In the foreground, was the public demonstration of knowledge and commitment to FBV constraining the focus of values education to the four FBVs. In the background and in parallel is the contextual moral pedagogy (Basourakos, 1999) where children are constructors of values within their domain.

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