

Diversity and Citizenship in the Curriculum: Research Review

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The Institute for Policy Studies in Education
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In May 2006 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) established the Diversity and Citizenship Curriculum Review Group, headed by Keith Ajegbo, former Headteacher of Deptford Green Secondary School, Lewisham. To aid the team, the DfES commissioned a research project, based on a literature review and case study research. The study was conducted between June to November 2006.

Aims

The two key aims of the research are:

- how diversity is promoted across the curriculum at all ages, and
- whether/how to incorporate ‘Modern British Cultural and Social History’ as a potential fourth pillar of the secondary citizenship programme.

Additionally, the literature review aimed to:

- identify good practice in the teaching of diversity
- identify the type of contemporary British identities and values that are addressed through the National Curriculum in English schools (including relevant international perspectives)
- identify approaches to promoting shared values and a common sense of identities through the teaching of modern history and citizenship (including relevant reviews/research conducted in other democratic societies).

This summary briefly outlines the project methods, before going on to summarise the findings of the literature review and the case study research.

Methods

In developing the literature review we searched key academic educational databases to identify relevant literature, including over 300 academic articles, reviews and books, research reports, government and independent outputs (e.g. the Runnymede Trust) and grey literature.

For the case study research, six schools were selected according to size, location and ethnic composition. We aimed to include three predominantly White schools and three multiethnic schools, which were ethnically and geographically diverse (e.g. rural/urban). Two days were spent in each of the case study schools.

The case studies included interviews, focus group discussions and classroom observations. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the headteacher, the person responsible for PSHE/citizenship education, and in secondary schools, a third

teacher with responsibility for history or the humanities curriculum. A total of 15 teachers (including the six headteachers) were interviewed. Across the six schools, 95 pupils from Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 participated in focus groups. Observations included lessons and other events such as assemblies and school debates. Policies, schemes of work and other curriculum strategies pertaining to diversity and citizenship in the curriculum were collected from the case study schools.

The literature review was conducted between June to September 2006 and the case study data collection took place between late September and mid October.

Literature Review: Key Findings

Curriculum diversity

- National Curriculum guidelines identify various ways in which specific subjects such as Mathematics, English, Geography, Modern Foreign Languages and Citizenship Education can promote a greater understanding of diversity amongst pupils. However, the research evidence suggests that schools tend to emphasise the discourses of culture and religion to the exclusion of other aspects of diversity (e.g. social and White British *diversity*).
- Documentation from both the DfES and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority clearly indicates that teachers are allowed and encouraged to use professional flexibility in deciding how they deliver the curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4, which would allow a more direct focus on diversity. But some reports show that there is some concern about the extent to which teachers are aware of this flexibility.
- A number of analyses of the National Curriculum have criticised the way in which it has adopted a Eurocentric approach and how it fails to value cultural/ethnic diversity.
- Research has raised concerns about teachers' knowledge of diversity and the effectiveness of teacher training in enabling teachers to cover diversity issues. The data also points to a misconception amongst some teachers that subjects such as Mathematics and Science do not allow for discussion about the world and local and national contexts.
- Evidence suggests that teaching about diversity is limited both by the absence or relatively low numbers of minority ethnic groups in some schools and by diversity not being identified as a school priority.
- Whilst some schools are sensitive to the identities of their students the literature review points to the need for more work to be done through the curriculum to enable pupils to understand the plurality of groups in Britain including students from Welsh, Scottish and Northern-Irish backgrounds. This is considered important in eliminating misinformation about 'race', however, it is evident that

some minority ethnic pupils would prefer not to have issues of 'race' and ethnicity discussed in the classroom.

- Overall, the literature suggests that in order to effectively acknowledge diversity, the curriculum needs to provide discursive resources to promote 'collective identities' and to challenge ideologies that construct the nation and national identity in ways that exclude minority ethnic groups. Importantly, it should allow national identity and historical events to be 'retold' in order to demonstrate the contribution of minority ethnic groups.

British identities and promoting shared values

- There is a wealth of literature on individual and British identities which indicates that identities are socially constructed and that individuals often hold multiple and mixed ethnic and national identities, as well as other social identities based for example on religion, gender, sexuality, social class and (dis)ability. Several authors argue that people with the same ethnic or national identity should not be seen as homogeneous groups, and that national identity can marginalise as well as exclude those that are not of a dominant ethnic group within a nation.
- 'Britishness' is often equated with Englishness (thus excluding other groups such as Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish), 'Whiteness' and also with Christianity. Advocates of citizenship education are concerned that incorporating 'Britishness' into the curriculum should not lead to 'indoctrination into a narrow, fixed, uncritical and intolerant nationalism' (Breslin, Rowe and Thornton 2006:21) as opposed to developing a critical understanding of shared citizenship values across all groups.
- A number of researchers have highlighted potential challenges and problems to dealing with 'difference', diversity and shared values. For example, Davies (2001) argues that 'difference' needs to be recognised and validated and inequality challenged. Other writers have stressed, for example, the need for teachers to have a good grounding in diversity if they are to teach about shared values and facilitate social cohesion (e.g. Home Office Cantle Report, 2001).
- Ofsted (2006:13) found that 'the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding in Key Stage 3, and their origins and implications in Key Stage 4, are only rarely deconstructed to explore in any detail what this implies'. This absence was considered pivotal to understanding about Britain, 'Britishness' and the principles and procedures that underpin British democracy.

Key Findings: Case Studies

Diversity

- Those schools that had developed a diverse curriculum were much more likely to focus on the global than the British.
- Teachers often referred to diversity and ethnicity in a way that focussed almost exclusively on minority ethnic groups and their cultures. White ethnicity, and the extent of diversities within this, was not considered. Pupils' responses also tended to give examples of the non-White when asked about diversity and identity.
- Pupils in multiethnic schools were more likely to experience a curriculum addressing issues of diversity, and to learn about minority ethnic groups. However, some found a diverse curriculum to be repetitive, resulting in some being bored by the curriculum, and several wanting to learn more about British people as a whole because as one pupil said 'we don't learn about different people in Britain, we just learn about people with different cultures'.
- Some pupils said that school teaching about particular faiths presented 'ideal types' of behaviour and practice that did not match with their own or their families' religious practices.
- In some schools there seemed to be a disjuncture between the 'right' discourse on diversity and tolerance of 'difference' as learnt in school and some pupils' views and experiences outside school.
- Further guidance is required (by those teaching in predominantly White schools) on delivering a diverse curriculum, and opportunities provided in initial teacher training and continuing professional development for teachers to develop effective diversity practice.

British identities and shared British values

- Most of the case study schools did not specifically explore White British diversity or White British identities.
- Some pupils have a strong local identity, which holds greater significance than a national identity.
- Pupils in mainly White schools seemed less likely to have been taught about minority ethnic immigration in Britain, and the contributions of minority ethnic groups to British society.
- Few pupils had experienced lessons where they talked about things that people in Britain share.

- Some indigenous pupils' experience of identity issues in the curriculum is that they have a deficit or a residual British/English identity. Indigenous White British pupils in multiethnic schools also seemed less confident to talk about their White British heritage in lessons.
- All of the pupils wanted to learn more about indigenous and non-indigenous British people.
- Guidance is required on delivering citizenship education in the primary sector.

Modern British Cultural and Social History

- There was a mixed reaction from teachers as to whether Modern British Cultural and Social History (MBCSH) should be added to the citizenship curriculum. On the one hand it was felt that the history curriculum already covered such issues, and on the other, that the citizenship education curriculum provided scope to do this, but was considered 'overloaded'.
- If MBCSH is to become a fourth pillar of the citizenship curriculum it was proposed that it should explore what a modern British culture involves and it would also be worthwhile covering issues such as British identity, immigration, and the contributions of diverse groups worldwide to different aspects of modern British life.

Concluding comments

Despite the small-scale nature of the case study research, we can point to a series of broad impressions and areas of agreement amongst the school staff and pupils with whom we spoke. We found a great willingness to talk about these issues from both these groups.

There were a number of areas in which it seems greater information and clarity is required, by staff and pupils. We found a number of cases where teachers and pupils referred to diversity and ethnicity in a way that focussed almost exclusively on minority ethnic groups and their cultures. White ethnicity, and the extent of diversities within this, was not considered. Teachers should be encouraged to recognise that individuals have multiple and overlapping identities, and that all pupils should be encouraged to see that they can describe themselves in these different ways. Some identities may be seen as nested, one within another (e.g. Newcastle/North East/England/British/European/Global), and that which of these is dominant may be contingent on location, circumstance and moment in time. This can be helpful in developing understanding of similarities and unities, as well as diversities. Pupils in multiethnic schools were more likely to learn about diverse groups. However, they also want to learn more about British people.

There was widespread consensus that a move to incorporate Modern British Cultural and Social History into the citizenship curriculum was problematic. Any definition of

‘Britishness’ would inevitably be controversial and might well leave some pupils, both from minority ethnic groups and from some White groups, feeling that they were not fully included in the term.

We noted four characteristics of school and curriculum practice that appeared to lead to good practice. These were:

Strong and effective leadership in the area of diversity/identities in the curriculum, and support for teachers to feel a sense of ‘ownership’ in this area.

Planning and guidance: effective planning is needed so that pupils do not repeatedly study the same groups and religions in different years and become bored, and also explicit guidance for teachers teaching citizenship, and for teaching about diversity in mainly White schools.

The use of pupils’ own experiences when talking about diversity and identities, which can help reduce idealisation and stereotyping of particular cultures by some teachers (and pupils).

The use of pupils’ idealism: There was a perception of generational differences in acceptance and tolerance of people from diverse ethnic groups, and in attitudes towards racism. This shows an optimism and idealism that might be useful in developing teaching strategies that encompass diversity and identities.

It is evident that in implementing a more diverse curriculum it will be necessary for schools and teachers to consider precisely what is meant by ‘diversity’ and how this can be achieved through the curriculum. Diversity and identities in contemporary Britain are changing and kaleidoscopic. We all have multiple identities, and one of these, for almost all of us, is some form of ‘Britishness’ in particular circumstances and contexts. The curriculum needs to allow pupils to understand and appreciate diversity and its values, and that they have their own identities within this diversity. This is a sensitive and controversial area, in which teachers need to be given firm support to develop with their pupils, from government, local authorities, school governors and headteachers. The citizenship curriculum appears to be the most appropriate place to locate this. Teaching in areas that are controversial and sensitive requires particular skills and courage: all teachers need to be trained and supported to deliver these effectively.

Moreover, if schools are to offer a more diverse curriculum which acknowledges and affirms the experience and heritage of diverse groups and their participation in British life, as well as promote greater acceptance and understanding of diversity, community cohesion and British identities, the evidence both from the literature review and the case study findings indicates that schools would need a commitment and responsiveness to current and historical issues that help shape the future, and an understanding of the contribution of diverse groups to the development of multiethnic Britain. It also suggests that teachers will need to ensure that all groups are included, to foster in pupils a greater commitment to building a more equitable society. In order to do this, there is evidence to

suggest that teachers will need to develop (or further develop) the requisite knowledge, skills and confidence in initial teacher training and continuing professional development.

This research also points towards the need for teachers to develop an understanding of their own values, prejudices and attitudes towards diversity and for an appreciation of diversity as a curriculum opportunity rather than as a threat. Such an appreciation would help teachers to implement a diverse curriculum which situates *all* students in the centre and ‘links ethnic histories’ with the national culture/identity (Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist, 2004) and encourages young people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to value and respect diversity, challenge racism and stereotypical attitudes and develop a willingness to learn more about people they are like and different to:

I think it would be a really good opportunity to express ourselves to other people, so they know how you feel to be British and what it is like to come from different countries or look different, or sound different but be in this country. (White female, Year 5, School F)

INTRODUCTION

In May 2006, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) established the Diversity and Citizenship Curriculum Review Group, headed by Keith Ajegbo, former Headteacher of Deptford Green Secondary School, Lewisham.

This report consists of a literature review and case study findings. They aim to provide a context for the Diversity and Citizenship Review Group to help them reflect on the objectives of the overall project, in particular:

- i) how diversity is promoted across the curriculum at all ages, and
- ii) whether/how to incorporate “Modern British Cultural and Social History” as a potential fourth pillar of the secondary citizenship programme.

Before setting out to research and analyse the ways in which ‘diversity’ is addressed through the curriculum it is important to first establish an agreed definition of the term ‘diversity’. Throughout this review we have used the DfES Diversity and Citizenship Review Group’s working definition of diversity, which is expressed as follows:

Britain is a society made up of a diverse range of ethnicities, cultures, languages and religions, which is constantly evolving. As an important aspect of ‘*Every Child Matters*¹’, students need to explore their range of identities: personal, local, national and global. Through the curriculum, students should have opportunities, in the first instance, to explore their own identity in relation to the local community. Beyond that, they need to be able to locate themselves in wider British society and ultimately to be able to understand British values in a global context. In order to appreciate not only the diversity of Britain but also its unique identity, students should:

- explore the origins of Britain and how different cultures have created modern Britain
- explore the representations of different racial, ethnic, cultural and religious groups in Britain and the world
- explore the consequences of racial and religious intolerance and discrimination
- develop a critical literacy, which allows them to reflect on their own cultural traditions and those of others.

In undertaking this literature review and case study research on behalf of the DfES we agreed to cover the following areas. These were to:

- i) explore how diversity is reflected in the National Curriculum in English schools

¹ *Every Child Matters: Change for Children (DfES, 2003c)* is a national policy document which places emphasis on valuing each individual child (in particular their identity and self-esteem) and improving their educational and social outcomes.

- ii) identify good practice in the teaching of diversity
- iii) identify the type of contemporary British identities and values that are addressed through the National Curriculum in English schools (including relevant international perspectives)
- iv) identify approaches to promoting shared values and a common sense of identities through the teaching of modern history and citizenship (including relevant reviews/research conducted in other democratic societies).

After briefly discussing the methodology utilised in the literature review, we will go on to explore the ways in which diversity is explored through the National Curriculum (section 1). We then move to explore the processes through which ‘British’ and other identities are constructed (sections 2-3) and the ways in which British identities and shared citizenship values are addressed through the National Curriculum (sections 4-7). The case study methodology is outlined in section 8 with the main findings discussed in sections 9-10. Some final concluding comments are provided in section 11. This encapsulates findings from the literature review and case study research, as well as suggestions for future curriculum delivery. Two appendices are attached, Appendix A detailing useful further sources, and Appendix B providing an outline of some of the media debates concerning ‘Britishness’ and British identity over the past year.

Methodology: Literature review

In developing this review we searched academic educational databases (e.g. the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS), the British Education Index (BEI)) to identify relevant literature covering the period of the 1980s to the present, as well as key earlier identity theorists. Relevant literature identified by this search included academic articles and books, research reports, government and independent outputs (e.g. the Runnymede Trust) and grey literature (e.g. media outputs). We also used our knowledge of the field to supplement this. We were also able to utilise literature reviews previously undertaken, for example, by Osler and Starkey (2005) on education for democratic citizenship and reviews undertaken by Kerr and Cleaver (2004) and Whiteley (2005) as part of the DfES citizenship education longitudinal study (2001-2009) that is in the process of being conducted.

In identifying relevant sources in the electronic databases mentioned above we searched the following keywords: diversity, curriculum, culturally relevant curriculum, inclusive curriculum, citizenship, citizenship education, British identities, national identity, ethnic identity, ‘Britishness’, democratic/citizenship values, history and other curriculum areas. Our searches provided us with a database of 300 publications on which we based this review and analysis.

After an initial mapping of the key issues we analysed and coded the searched sources. This involved coding origin, type of material (research report, policy analysis, evaluation of practice, academic etc.), school curriculum, demographic characteristics (gender,

ethnicity, age etc.), research method used, theoretical approach, quality and codes related to the objectives of the review.

1. DIVERSITY THROUGH THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Given the particular context of this review, and its relationship to the work of the Review Group, it seems appropriate to begin with an overview of the ways in which the current National Curriculum in England addresses current ideas about diversity in society, and the extent to which various curriculum subjects are expected and able to explore these. This section draws on National Curriculum documents, guidance and commentary from the Department for Education and Skills, and reports of the curriculum in practice as observed by Ofsted inspection reports. It also draws on a number of research studies of curriculum practice in schools.

The early stages of the National Curriculum

The National Curriculum was introduced to schools in stages from 1988. The initial guidelines on how issues of equality and diversity should be addressed in the National Curriculum were drafted following the recommendations from the Swann Report (DES, 1985). The guidance, which required that the curriculum should take account of the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society, was not published at the time (Parekh, 2000a). Despite this guidance, there was at that time political pressure, from some influential groups, that pupils in English schools should follow a curriculum that reflected particular English/British traditions, culture and history, and that all pupils should be treated alike, without reference to or consideration of their cultural and ethnic identities (Ross, 2000). It was argued that recognition of cultural diversity was likely to undermine the nation's common culture (Olneck, 2001), 'inflamm racial tension' and create resentment rather than tackle educational disadvantage (Gillborn, 2001). The National Curriculum was considered by some of those responsible for its drafting to be the means by which a common British (or English: the two terms were often misused interchangeably) identity was to be fostered amongst pupils (Menter, 1992; Minhas, 1988; Tomlinson, 1990). Many researchers have drawn attention to the English bias that was evident in the curriculum at that time, and the presumption that the school population was homogeneous. For example, Burtonwood (2002) and Delamont and Atkinson (1995) point out the virtual absence of the literature of the two main indigenous and linguistic minorities, Welsh and Gaelic speaking pupils.

Engaging with diversity

The National Curriculum has subsequently undergone a process of revision, particularly since the late 1990s. There have been changes in emphasis, and a number of policy initiatives have sought to redress this initial lack of diversity in the National Curriculum.

Following the publication of the Macpherson (1999 – following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry) and the Parekh Reports (2000a), it became more widely accepted that a diverse curriculum was an essential prerequisite for understanding contemporary British society. In an attempt to acknowledge and encourage diversity through the curriculum, statutory guidance on inclusion in the National Curriculum was introduced in 1999. This

encouraged teachers to take account of the needs and experiences of all pupils in their planning and teaching. 'Diversity' was identified in the guidance as including:

boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups including Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and those from diverse linguistic, religious backgrounds. (DfEE Circular 10/1999/qca.org.uk)

Addressing pupils of these backgrounds was intended to enable all pupils to participate in lessons 'fully and effectively' (DfEE Circular 10/1999). Essential elements in valuing pupil diversity were to ensure that pupils learned to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising from race, gender, ability or disability, and that all forms of bullying, harassment and stereotypical views are challenged.

Arguments for diversity in the curriculum

It is argued that effective education in the twenty-first century requires that 'diversity' is viewed as a valuable learning source for all students and that 'differences' are viewed as learning opportunities (Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist, 2004; Le Roux, 2002). The Home Office Cante Report on Community Cohesion (2001) argued that the teaching ethos of schools should reflect the different cultures within the school and within the wider community. This was one of a succession of reports, government and independent, that argued the need for school managers and leaders to develop an ethos and whole school approach which reflected diverse cultures, and established and maintained an inclusive school curriculum (e.g. Blair *et al.*, 1998; DfES, 2003a; DfES, 2004a/b; Ofsted, 2002; The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment, 2005). For example, the consultation document *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils* (DfES, 2003a) emphasised the need for 'strong and effective leadership', incorporating a commitment to valuing and including pupils, both of which were considered important in developing in schools a culture of respect for diversity. To support this, one element of the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) run by the National College for School Leadership is a module on 'leading an inclusive school', which stresses meeting the needs of all pupils, promoting good race relations, developing strategies to teach pupils about ethnic and cultural diversity and fostering understanding of social and religious issues. Suggestions for fostering an ethos and culture of respect for diversity have included examining the language used to describe particular groups, promoting tolerance, positively affirming and reflecting 'mixed' and 'mono' heritages, acknowledging differences, and challenging racism and stereotypes (DfES, 2003a/2004a; Tikly *et al.*, 2004).

At a wider level, teachers have been encouraged to use materials and images in their teaching which reflect social, religious and cultural diversity (http://www.nc.uk.net_resources/html/inclusion.shtml). This valuing of diversity is often couched within terms such as 'equal opportunities' (for example, 'teachers can provide equality of opportunity by taking account of pupils' specific religious or cultural beliefs relating to the representation of ideas or experiences'), 'raising pupil attainment', 'educational

inclusion’ (including special educational needs; disability) and ‘motivating pupils to learn’ (www.qca.org.uk). Thus, as part of motivating pupils, teachers are encouraged to plan work which builds on the interests and cultural experiences of pupils ‘in the school and country’ (DfES, 2004b:10). Another example is found in the National Literacy Strategy, where teachers are encouraged to acknowledge the contribution of various cultures to the development of subject disciplines.

Other and more direct justifications are offered by Blair *et al.* (1998), who reason that if the curriculum acknowledges the diversity in British society this will help raise the achievement of minority ethnic pupils by giving them access to a more relevant curriculum (see also The Commission on African and Asian Heritage, 2005; The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment, 2005) and also be a way to counter institutional racism. Their report found that Black and minority ethnic pupils were better encouraged to work in schools in which the curriculum drew on the cultures and multiple identities of these pupils. Schools with a diverse curriculum have been found to be effective in facilitating the achievement of minority ethnic pupils (Ofsted, 2002; DfES, 2003a; Tikly *et al.*, 2004). The London Primary Challenge (DfES, 2006a) has also sought to improve minority ethnic attainment and raise standards in English and Mathematics by helping schools to ‘increase their capacity to provide a broad and rich curriculum’.

Blair *et al.*’s (1998) justification that curriculum diversity will address institutional racism was also a response to the need to promote race equality and address racism, which was a requirement of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. All schools have a duty to prepare and maintain a race equality policy and to facilitate race equality in practice. The requirement to have such a policy gives schools the opportunity to review how they promote diversity and racial harmony.

The arguments for valuing diversity often appear to place particular emphasis on ‘cultural diversity’ and ‘cultural knowledge’. For example, the QCA website ‘Respect for All’ argues that the school and the curriculum should reflect the cultures, histories and values of minority ethnic groups, and that teachers should make use of the flexibility allowed in the National Curriculum (see below) to make their subjects relevant to pupils’ own experience and to reflect their cultural heritage. Schools are encouraged to plan lessons and deliver a curriculum that ‘reflects the cultures and experiences of the different communities in the school and country’ (DfES, 2003a:10-11). Teachers of pupils learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) are expected to make links within the curriculum to the culture and language of these pupils, because these are viewed as central to developing a sense of identity and belonging (DfES, 2004a:6; see also DfES, 2005b in respect of newly arrived pupils). Another example is seen in the award of Chartered London Teacher Status, where teachers are expected to demonstrate cultural knowledge – this, ‘with all the implications of racial, national and religious prejudices’, is regarded as key to facilitating communication, learning and developing mutual respect which is considered ‘characteristic of peaceful and coherent civilised societies’ (Brighouse, 2003:online).

Overall, the literature suggests that in order to effectively acknowledge diversity, a curriculum needs to provide discursive resources to promote ‘collective identities’ and to challenge ideologies that construct the nation and national identity to exclude minority groups (Fraser, 1997). Importantly, it should allow national identity and historical events to be ‘retold’ in order to demonstrate the contribution of minority ethnic groups (Fraser, 1997). It should also facilitate cultural competence, creating conditions in which pupils can maintain their cultural identities while achieving academic success (Ladson Billings, 1995).

Guidance and Inspection

The Early Years/Foundation Stage curriculum guidance requires teachers to take account of pupils’ ethnic, faith and cultural heritage, and states that these should be used as starting points for teaching and learning. The guidance emphasises developing a strong sense of ‘self’ in pupils and encouraging positive attitudes towards others. Guidance produced by the DfES (2004a) for those working in mainly White schools also recommends that multiculturalism should permeate the school and its curriculum. Schools are encouraged to utilise resources that reflect the multiethnic nature of British society, and in doing so, use opportunities to explore ‘cultural differences, differences of perception, interpretation and narrative’ (DfES, 2004a:20). In exploring issues of diversity, the document proposes that teaching about ‘difference’ must go hand in hand with teaching about ‘commonality and sameness’, as very often the ‘boundaries between cultures are porous and frequently unclear’ (ibid), where, for example, cultures borrow from each other in fields such as art, design, drama, literature, music, technology and mathematics. As well as developing an understanding of what is shared with or derived from other cultures and religions, schools are encouraged to acknowledge the contributions of diverse cultures to the development of subject knowledge. Some teachers may consider focusing on ‘all cultures, societies and traditions’ (DfES, 2004a) as daunting, but this seems to reflect the wider global agenda that schools are being encouraged to follow (DfES, 2005a).

Cultural and other diversities within Britain, including English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish groups, appear to be less explicitly identified. Emphasis is instead placed on the ‘national’, where, for example, the DfES (2004a) refers to working with ‘national projects and schools in other parts of Britain’.

Ofsted requires its inspectors to report on the ‘spiritual, moral, social and cultural’ development of pupils. Assessment on how well the school staff address these areas is included as part of the overall inspection report on the school. In 2000 Ofsted introduced regulatory training on the evaluation of educational inclusion for all inspectors, and this had a strong emphasis on ‘race’. Ofsted school inspections also include a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. The Ofsted guidance (2000:9) sets out key questions to test a school’s inclusiveness: ‘does the school have strategies for promoting inclusion, including race equality, and how well are they working?’ They also suggest that it is important to look at how pupils relate to each other, and whether pupils are tolerant of other pupils’ beliefs, cultures and backgrounds.

Ofsted also point out the obligation that schools have to address the Macpherson Report's (1999) recommendation 67: that the curriculum be 'aimed at valuing cultural diversity and preventing racism, in order to better reflect the needs of a diverse society' (Ofsted, 2000:37).

Availability of flexibility in making the curriculum more innovative/diverse

Documentation from both the DfES and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) clearly indicates that teachers are allowed and encouraged to use professional flexibility in deciding how they deliver the curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4. The process of disapplication of the revised National Curriculum allows schools 'considerable flexibility within the National Curriculum to develop their curriculum appropriately' (DfES, 2003b:3-5) to meet pupils' individual needs. The revised programmes of study in all subjects give greater flexibility for teachers 'to decide on the ... aspects of a subject pupils will study in depth'. Statutory changes made by the QCA to the Key Stage 4 curriculum, effective from September 2004, were described as giving schools 'greater flexibility and choice in the Key Stage 4 curriculum' so as to 'motivate students and encourage achievement' (QCA/2003/1167:5-6). The 2002 Education Act allows schools to apply to the Secretary of State to disapply all or part of the National Curriculum in order to meet their aims through innovative curriculum development. This lets schools develop their curricula beyond the degree that is already facilitated by the general flexibility available within the National Curriculum (DfES, 2003b).

Some reports show that there is some question about the extent to which teachers are aware of this flexibility. For example, QCA (2006) monitoring of mathematics in 2005-06 suggested that teachers/schools are not aware of the flexibility they are allowed to be creative in delivering the mathematics curriculum. This was further demonstrated by the monitoring group's search for effective approaches to diversity.

The Department also encourages flexibility within the national Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and the Primary National Strategy on Excellence and Enjoyment (DfES, 2003d:online) in order to motivate and engage pupils. This guidance is to encourage primary schools to shape the curriculum and to be creative and innovative in developing their own 'distinct identity and ethos, which reflects a good understanding of and close partnership with the wider school community' (ibid). Within this guidance it is not made clear whether the 'distinct identity' referred to is a school identity, a national or a local identity. What is made explicit, however, is that the expectation is that, in being creative, schools will look to 'the wider community beyond the school' (DfES, 2005a:4) to make the curriculum more diverse. Whilst not explicit, this also suggests that 'creativity' and 'innovation' should incorporate cultural, ethnic and social diversity. The other presumption in these guidance documents is that the 'community beyond the school' is diverse and is able to offer different perspectives.

The extent to which the National Curriculum in the UK is seen to promote diversity

Ofsted (1999) reported that schools were working within the framework of the National Curriculum to promote an understanding of diversity, but also reported that they found in some schools a ‘mismatch between the curriculum on offer and the aims they wanted to achieve in relation to the understanding and appreciation of diversity’ (Ofsted, 2000:20). There have been a number of analyses of the National Curriculum which have criticised the way in which it has adopted a Eurocentric approach and how it fails to value cultural/ethnic diversity (e.g. Appiah, 2001; Macpherson Report, 1999; Parekh Report, 2000a; The Commission on African and Asian Heritage, 2005; The Runnymede Trust, 2003; the GARP project 2006 [this project integrates global and anti-racist perspectives in the primary curriculum]). A report by The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment (2005:15) drew attention to the views of young minority ethnic people who considered the curriculum ‘not relevant to us’. Ofsted (1999:7) has noted that ‘very few schools review their curricular and pastoral strategies to ensure that they are sensitive to the ethnic groups in the student population and the wider community’.

Specific criticisms of this lack of a diverse approach were made by the Commission on African and Asian Heritage (2005). The Commission acknowledged the diversity evident in the national history curriculum, but was critical that emphasis was placed on the history of African-Americans rather than the histories of those communities of Asian and African descent in Britain (for example, of the pre-second world war African and Asian presence in Britain, and of the intellectual contributions of African and Asian aristocracy in the 18th and 19th centuries). The Commission suggested that there was a lack of positive images of diverse communities and a lack of consistency in what is taught across schools. While they reported ‘there is a deluge of disparate material made available for teachers in relation to Black History Month’ (2005:62), they observed that what was required was an effective mapping of the African and Asian heritage resources, including museums, that were available and should be utilised all year round. Tikly *et al.* (2004) are similarly critical of the way in which Black History Month is offered by some schools as a way of addressing the lack of minority ethnic representation in the curriculum. They report that Black History Month tends to marginalise the experiences and heritages of minority ethnic groups in Britain, rather than reflecting their normality (also Demie, 2005; The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment, 2005). Diversity presented in this partial manner, through the use of a few additional texts on diversity, suggests that ‘diversity’ is not viewed as mainstream and is indeed at the margins of ‘normal’ or mainstream British history. These writers also observe that there are contributions made by other minority ethnic groups to British society that need to be included within the curriculum.

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment (2005) highlighted concerns identified by young minority ethnic pupils about the teaching of Black history and culture in schools which it was felt had a tendency to highlight ‘differences’ and/or to ‘other’ young Black people. It was noted, for example, that where Black history was taught in some schools this was through

discussions relating to slavery which tended to define African–Caribbean peoples as ‘you/your’ slaves and the White British traders and owners as ‘us/our’. This led in some instances to ‘resentment from White pupils’ and ‘resentment and tension and damage to the self esteem of the African-Caribbean pupils’ (ibid:17). Religious education was also criticised for excluding traditional African-Caribbean religions. Such experiences resulted in these pupils arguing for ‘input and involvement when Black history and culture is studied’ (ibid:25).

A number of teachers have been described as having concerns about the perceived lack of emphasis on cultural diversity at a national level. For example, Cline *et al.*, (2002:93) report teachers in mainly White schools feeling that the National Numeracy Strategy ‘does not take into account ... difference in race [and] religion’. Similarly, the National Literacy Strategy was viewed as not supporting multicultural education, and teachers had concerns that there did not appear to be ‘any recent development at national level encouraging a focus on this area of work’ (Cline *et al.*, 2002:4).

The General Teaching Council for England (GTC) (2006:14) identified two main barriers to teachers’ creativity and ability to apply the National Curriculum flexibly:

- a) national testing, the nature of which encouraged some teachers to ‘teach to the test’, thus narrowing their teaching methods and content
- b) the way in which some school leaders and middle managers blocked the development of an ethos of flexibility, cross-curricular working and trust in teachers’ skills and creativity.

Studies also show that some teachers argue that, while flexibility in the curriculum is promoted, the teaching timetable is not sufficiently flexible to enable this to happen effectively (Cline *et al.*, 2002). The GTC suggest that there needs to be greater flexibility in this respect across all Key Stages, if schools are to meet the agenda for a diverse curriculum required by ‘*Every Child Matters*’ to enable all pupils to make a positive contribution to society.

Recent proposals by the QCA to change the 11-14 curriculum are described as aiming to further reduce prescription and provide teachers with more opportunities to be innovative and bring greater consistency across the curriculum subjects (Bloom *et al.*, in TES, 30/6/06). These changes also allow for greater emphasis on diversity in British and global societies: for example, proposed changes to the history curriculum would result in the current compulsory modules on Britain, world and European history being replaced with an emphasis on themes running throughout history, the need for pupils to understand chronology and how individual events fit into the bigger picture. The proposed changes to the citizenship education curriculum would, while maintaining pupils developing an understanding of citizenship in school, local, regional, national, European, international and global contexts, add a new emphasis on the understanding of the inclusion of diverse groups, and of diversity in British society. Proposed changes to the geography curriculum would emphasise issues of local and global relevance, whilst modern foreign languages would be expected to cover global citizenship. The importance of understanding cultural

diversity takes on greater significance in subjects such as design and technology, art and design, English and music. In art and design for example, pupils will be encouraged to look more at art as a tool for communication across different cultures, whilst those undertaking design and technology will be expected to have a knowledge of the cultural, economic and personal factors underlying these designs. In English the proposals will require pupils to study a range of literature which will enable them to understand English literary heritage and other cultures and traditions. In music there is an expectation for pupils to study music that reflects a variety of cultural and international traditions. Here teachers will be encouraged to bring a global dimension to their teaching of the subject.

Examples of curriculum diversity in the UK

Having described the various changes in approaches to diversity in the whole curriculum, some of the opportunities to approach diversity that are available within specific curriculum subjects are now discussed.

Mathematics

In its introduction to mathematics, the National Curriculum Handbook observes that ‘different cultures have contributed to the development and application of mathematics. Today the subject transcends cultural boundaries and its importance is universally recognised’ (National Curriculum:online). The draft specification from EdExcel for the GCSE in modular/linear mathematics (submitted to the QCA in January 2006) describes the proposed module as helping candidates ‘to explore mathematical models of the real world’, in which ‘there will be many naturally arising moral and cultural issues ... and aspects of European developments for discussion’ (www.qca.org.uk). Purvis and Bergstrom (2006:37) have shown that it is possible to ‘infuse classroom maths with an appreciation of shared cultures and to acknowledge the contributions made to mathematics by people of diverse ethnicities and gender the world over’ (see also Cotton, 2001). They found that such interventions helped to motivate pupils, particularly when they learnt about mathematicians from their own cultural backgrounds. Tressider (2006) similarly found that the mathematics National Curriculum Strategy framework was useful in developing activities such as ‘planning and collecting data’, which could help Year 8 pupils in London and Derbyshire explore statistics whilst at the same time develop an understanding of communities different from their own. However, it was felt that such activities were less likely to work where the data used is considered trivial or made up: ‘all too often we were presented with a learning objective for which we would find ourselves making up data or collecting trivial data in order to teach the [National Curriculum] objective’ (Tressider, 2006:40).

By Key Stage 4 pupils are expected to gain knowledge and understanding of various aspects of the diverse origins and usages of mathematics, for example in:

- numbers and the number system: a knowledge of the origins of ‘zero’ and number, number songs/rhymes in different languages

- calculations: an understanding of methods originating in different cultures, e.g. Vedic maths, Chinese abacus, Plumb lines
- shape, space and measures: an awareness of the contributions of Islamic art and pattern, origami/kites, Hindu, Muslim, Chinese calendars
- handling data: an understanding of how to collect data and information from different countries
- using and applying mathematical and thinking skills: the ability to apply skills to problem solving and investigations in a range of cultural contexts, in both mathematics and other curriculum areas (www.qca.org.uk).

English

The English curriculum offers opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of diversity through the teaching of English. For example, at Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to develop awareness of others (including differences and similarities) and are encouraged to show respect and tolerance and value differences. This is continued at Key Stage 2 whereby pupils are expected to explore themes of co-operation, interdependence, conflict resolution and role-play. A pertinent example is of a drama initiative '*Here, There and Everywhere*', which was used to help primary aged pupils in mainly White schools in Derbyshire explore issues of cultural diversity and racism (see Richardson, 2004). At Key Stage 3 it is expected that pupils will 'explore and respond to the writing of major authors and poets from a range of cultures' (National Curriculum online). It is argued that effective teaching within the English curriculum should enable pupils to examine issues of cultural identity challenge stereotypes and think critically, and that pupils should be encouraged to:

- develop their understanding of the lives, attitudes and perspectives of different peoples and races through reading and discussing a range of quality texts from different cultures
- choose and discuss texts, stories and situations with which they can identify and which support their own feelings of self-worth and personal growth
- develop confidence in speaking about a range of intellectual, emotional and moral issues
- listen to the opinions of others and respect and value their contributions even if these differ from their own
- collaborate in group activities, including drama and role play, that allow them to work together to resolve some of the issues relating to their daily lives or beyond if appropriate
- write about their own ideas and feelings and critically evaluate them in the light of views that may be different from their own (www.qca.org.uk).

Importantly, 'the study of spoken language (including accent, dialect and the use of standard and non-standard English) can draw attention to the important role that language plays in identity, group membership and acceptance, and status within and between cultural groups' (www.qca.org.uk).

Geography

The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 includes both local (e.g. the locality of the school) and global dimensions and opportunities to value diversity in the area. For example, unit 1 include shops, places of worship, food, homes and buildings, and comparing schools around the world. Pupils are encouraged to explore and value the diverse ways in which different groups and cultures respond to similar challenges presented by daily life. Unit 4 on holidays allows pupils to explore and talk about places they have visited. Unit 10 focuses on a village in India (www.qca.org.uk).

The geography curriculum requires pupils to:

- develop an understanding of different people, places and environments in different parts of the world
- develop an understanding of the environment and sustainable development, and ways of resolving these issues and
- study a locality in a country that is less economically developed than their own (www.qca.org.uk).

It also provides opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of:

- migration: the movement of people within countries and between countries is a natural human activity, stretching over several thousand years; awareness of the positive contribution made to the host society, socially, culturally and economically
- influences: the connections between different parts of the world; that events in one place may be influenced by decisions taken elsewhere
- inequalities: historical reasons for current inequalities; the ability to challenge negative stereotypes and images
- citizenship: an understanding of the links between geography and citizenship (www.qca.org.uk).

The QCA website *Respect for All* suggests strategies to value diversity and challenge stereotypical views and racism through geography. The programme of study notes that ‘as pupils study geography they encounter different societies and cultures. This helps them to realise how nations rely on one another. It can inspire them to think about their own place in the world, their values, and their rights and responsibilities... the programme of study requires that through geographical enquiry, pupils have a critical approach to their studies of places and environments’. For example, QCA unit 1 ‘around the school’ encourages pupils to explore and value the various ways in which different groups and cultures respond to similar challenges presented by daily life, whilst QCA unit 3 ‘an island home’ encourages teachers to utilise opportunities and direct links with people or places representing different cultures.

Modern Foreign Languages

Diversity is presented in the Modern Foreign Languages curriculum through:

- language: awareness that the target language is spoken in more than one location in the world
- national identity and language: recognising the diversity within and across communities speaking the same language; that national identity is experienced differently by different groups
- diversity: understanding and appreciating how diversity affects the daily life of different groups within society
- discrimination: recognising tokenism, bias and prejudice in print and other media
- culture: awareness that language learning is more than functional, seeing it also as a way of understanding cultures and making a contribution to global citizenship
- community: understanding the value of home and community languages as an important part of living in a multilingual community.

In the National Curriculum programme of study at Key Stages 3 and 4, requirements 4a and 4b provide pupils with opportunities to come into direct contact with aspects of different cultures. Requirements 4c and 4d ask pupils to ‘reflect on cultural similarities and differences, and to empathise with native speakers of the language they are learning’ (www.qca.ork.uk). A Respect for All Key Stage 3-4 activity ‘Burkina Faso’ provides opportunities for pupils to develop skills in French and cross-curricular activities in citizenship, geography and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) (www.qca.org.uk).

Art and design

The programme of study for art and design requires that pupils are taught about the work of artists, craftspeople and designers in different times and from different cultures (e.g. Europe and the wider world).

Religious Education

The programme of study for religious education offers a range of opportunities for pupils to learn about Christianity and other world religions including: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Through such diversity pupils are encouraged to empathise with diverse religions, traditions and cultures.

Science

The QCA (2005a) have supported a ‘*Cultural Inclusion in Science Project*’, which aims to promote positive images of young Black people in science. It is expected that the QCA will extend the project to include Turkish and Eastern Europe groups.

Citizenship education and the Humanities

Cultural diversity is a prominent theme in the National Curriculum programmes of study in Citizenship education. The QCA humanities team is currently working on developing teaching resources to support the teaching of multiethnic aspects of British history within

Key Stages 2 and 3. The QCA (2005b) inclusion team are also in the process of exploring 'how a culturally inclusive curriculum would work in schools'.

Preparing pupils for life in a multicultural society

The introductory section to the guidance and materials for initial teacher trainers (TTA, 2000:7-8) argues that trainee teachers need to understand the part they must play in 'preparing all pupils to play a full part in a culturally diverse, democratic society which values everybody and accords them equal rights'. It further argues that schools 'have an important part to play in helping all pupils to become informed, concerned citizens, and in increasing mutual understanding, respect and appreciation of cultural diversity'. Notwithstanding, Cline *et al.* (2002) found that none of the 14 case study schools in their study had developed a curriculum strategy for preparing pupils for life in a diverse society. They concluded that greater priority should be given to this, in policies and in curriculum development. But they cautioned against a 'one size fits all' solution, instead suggesting that moving forward 'will require that teachers in mainly White schools are supported towards a fuller understanding of the range of backgrounds and perspectives that are represented in the minority ethnic population in England in the twenty-first century' (ibid:7 – see also Le Roux, 2002). They further argued that it would be important to address in initial training teachers with prejudicial attitudes and who espouse 'unconscious condescension and stereotyping' (Cline *et al.*, 2002:137). The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment (2005) considered whether teacher training had a positive impact on teachers' ability to deliver a diverse curriculum and respond to all their pupils' needs. It was felt that 'training is not just required at the initial training stage, but throughout a teacher's career within schools' and that such training 'requires greater focus on key issues [relating to diversity] and should not just be tagged on to other initiatives' (2005:28).

The Home Office Cantle Report (2001) advocated teachers 'training in diversity' if they are to prepare pupils to live in a multiethnic society and engender community cohesion (see also TTA, 2003). However, it is known that only 35% of newly qualified teachers considered their initial training 'good' or 'very good' at preparing them to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds (TDA, 2005). Davies and Crozier (2006:19) also found an 'inconsistency across [initial training] providers in both the amount and the nature of the input students received about diversity'. One of the main difficulties associated with this difference in provision is 'that many providers do not regard diversity issues, and more specifically race, as sufficiently important, and that underlying this is the profound lack of confidence and understanding of some providers' in addressing such issues; leading to some delivering a 'simplistic approach' and lack of permeation across courses but 'consistent with the provision of information to meet the requirements of the QTS' (Qualified Teacher Status) (Davies and Crozier, 2006:20). Maylor (2006) suggests that the reduced emphasis on diversity in initial teacher training (ITT) is unlikely to effectively aid teachers' understanding of this issue.

According to Pullen (2000) teachers find it difficult to deliver a culturally relevant curriculum where they lack awareness of the cultural backgrounds of the pupils they are

teaching, and an understanding of appropriate cultural sensitivities (see also Powell, 1996). Moreover, teachers in Cline *et al.*'s study (2002:5) reported that issues of cultural diversity 'had not been covered either in their initial training or in any recent in-service training'. This led to a lack of knowledge and understanding of diversity in initial teacher education and in continuing professional development (Pullen, 2000), leading to teachers having a lack of confidence and a fear of getting things wrong. It is argued that, while some teachers want to understand diverse cultures so they can promote cross-cultural understanding within an overarching framework of more democratic values, this quest for understanding is sometimes underpinned by fear of the unknown (Cline *et al.*, 2002; Suleiman and Moore, 1996). This is particularly so where teachers live in a monocultural environment and have no knowledge and/or experience of diversity. This fear of the unknown leads to some teachers conceiving of 'diversity' as a 'source of divisiveness, conflict, and lack of cultural harmony' (Suleiman and Moore, 1996:4), perhaps because 'diversity' is viewed narrowly, only within cultural terms.

The Commission on African and Asian heritage (2005) further argued that teachers would need in-service training on the use and interpretation of collections and primary materials focusing on the African and Asian presence in Britain, the global legacy of empire and the complexity of colonialism. It was noted that teacher practice (and confidence) to incorporate cultural diversity in their teaching would need to be supported through the development of innovative teaching programmes and educational materials for expanding the scope of teaching across all subjects in the National Curriculum. They also advocate the need for schools to have a closer working relationship with museums, archives, libraries and galleries to help develop their practice and use of more appropriate resources.

Finally, a number of other potential barriers to effective teaching of diversity issues and preparing pupils for life in a multicultural society have been identified in the literature. Firstly, effective teaching may be limited by the lack of range of ethnicities found in the classroom and the absence of minority ethnic groups in the school (Cline *et al.*, 2002). It can also be constrained if diversity is not identified as a school priority, if a school emphasises global citizenship at the expense of diversity, or if a 'colour/culture' blind approach is adopted - an evaluation of the Aiming High African-Caribbean Achievement project (Tikly *et al.*, 2006) found that one of the main barriers to raising African-Caribbean achievement was where schools adopted such an approach. Another significant barrier identified in the literature is the misconception that mathematics and science are objective/value free subjects and devoid of cultural reference (Powell, 1996; Schuell, 1992), therefore not lending themselves to discussions about the world and local and national contexts. Others point out these subjects can offer space for discussion and cultural understanding, as mathematics is not independent of culture or cultural values (see Mendick, 2006; Povey, 2003; Skovsmose, 1994). In arriving at such understanding, Bishop (2001) and Cotton (2001) encourage teachers to be sensitive to pupils' cultural backgrounds (including respecting personal values and beliefs) and the type of mathematical knowledge that is valued and promoted through their teaching.

Raising awareness of diverse curricula in other countries

Having explored diversity through the National Curriculum in the UK, we now conclude this section with an exploration of some of the ways in which other countries have sought to elicit an understanding of diversity through their curricula.

Keime *et al.* (2002) sought through an intervention project to promote cultural awareness and the acceptance of diversity amongst elementary and high school pupils in predominantly White rural schools in the United States. This was considered necessary given that most of the pupils and teachers involved in the project had never been exposed to people from different ethnic backgrounds and could not identify cultural similarities amongst diverse groups. The project, which surveyed both student and teacher attitudes, found that 57% of the elementary and 91% of the high school pupils had never been in a class with African-American pupils, while 93% (of all students) had stereotypical attitudes (elicited through school surveys and social studies test scores) or expressed intolerant/derogatory views. Only a third of the high school pupils were able to identify cultural similarities. It also found that the pupils were used to experiencing a Eurocentric curriculum and that the teachers involved did not have access to diverse curriculum knowledge/training and/or materials.

Over a 16-week period an intervention programme which aimed to raise cultural awareness focused on four ethnic groups (northern European, Hispanic, African-American and Asian cultures). Elementary pupils experienced stories, information on holidays, and arts and crafts in the curriculum. For the high school pupils there were guest speakers, literature selections, writing assignments and information on festivals. Teachers were encouraged to develop lesson plans that would promote cultural awareness, provide a climate of cultural awareness, introduce students to diverse cultures and raise their awareness, and encourage students to keep weekly journals. The teacher survey aimed to gain an understanding of values amongst teachers and how well prepared they were to develop understanding of a multicultural society, and the implications for teachers developing understanding of cultural diversity.

After the intervention, 94% of pupils said they would choose a friend of another 'race' and there was evidence of greater tolerance of different cultures and a better understanding of multiculturalism. However, the impact of the project on pupils' attitudes was undermined by the fact that the school interventions did not always overlap with the home. Moreover, there were concerns that both elementary and high school pupils found it easier to identify differences rather than similarities across cultures, suggesting that a longer period of intervention was necessary. The continued emphasis on differences rather than similarities led the researchers to conclude that it was 'easier to change values at a younger age than when students' attitudes are already formed' (Keime *et al.*, 2002:28).

Also writing in an American context, Suleiman and Moore (1996) consider it important that in preparing future citizens teachers demonstrate how cultural 'difference' can co-exist with national commonalities. They argue that this can be achieved through the

curriculum by fostering better intercultural understanding, a recognition of commonalities amongst diverse groups, celebrating cultural and linguistic diversity and diverse values within a framework of pluralistic values, and by promoting tolerance. Within this discourse it is important that pupils do not 'become alienated and neutral in the intellectual and social discourse represented in the classroom' (1996:11). Pupils would need to see themselves represented within the curriculum as valued members of society. The curriculum content would also need to be meaningful to pupils' lives outside of school. More importantly, classrooms would need to operate in a climate of respect for diversity in which everyone's contribution is acknowledged and 'operates within a common vision that is not confined by any particular culture, frame of reference, belief system or other sociopolitical variables' (1996:12).

Fullinwider (2001) similarly argues that individuals cannot understand the 'other' without experiencing views of the 'other', and that the school culture needs to be modified so as to enable pupils to see differences as enriching and a process for learning. Garcia and Lopez (2005) writing in relation to Spanish teachers advocate teachers fostering empathy for diverse groups by developing shared experiences amongst pupils through role play and by promoting democratic values in the classroom. In order to value other cultures they suggest that pupils will need to have a good grounding in their own individual identity and values. It is further argued that dialogue 'is the best procedure for solving conflicts and for regulating interrelations among people' and that 'active respect is essential to achieve peaceful co-existence and consists in showing an interest in understanding others and not just in recognising the fact that they are there' (Garcia and Lopez, 2005:440-441).

The Harvard Civil Rights Project (2002) reports on a survey of high school seniors in an ethnically diverse public high school in Cambridge (USA) regarding their experiences of diversity in the curriculum, classroom discussions and working with peers from different backgrounds, citizenship and democratic principles and their attitudes toward diversity. The students who responded to the survey came from six groups, namely: 31% White, 18% African-American, 10% Latino, 14% 'other', 10% 'multiracial' and 4% Asian. These students had previously been educated in ethnically segregated schools while some continued to live in segregated areas (e.g. all White areas). In this ethnically mixed school these students experienced a diverse curriculum and learnt about 'race' (and diversity within groups) in social studies and history lessons. Forty per cent of all students reported that their exposure in the curriculum to different cultures had helped them to understand 'points of view different from their own' (2002:3). With regard to citizenship and democratic principles, teachers encouraged pupils to work with pupils from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, with 90-99% of pupils reporting that they felt 'comfortable' working with pupils from different ethnic groups. While students (White and 'immigrant') inferred they benefited from learning about different ethnic groups and desired to learn more about such groups, they also reported to have developed a wider understanding of their own culture and social background, and over 90% seemed prepared to respect and work and live in diverse settings with people who are different from themselves.

Riel (2000) reported on 'learning circles'. These were described as virtual communities that have no fixed locations or time zones. Learning circles are group conversations conducted by electronic mail (virtual classrooms) and in the classroom. Learning circles help to create a shared way of thinking about 'ourselves' with subjects such as mathematics, science, literature, and the world enabling students from different cultures, religions, regions, ages etc. with a common educational focus to work together 'in a medium that treats diversity as a resource' (2000:5). Through these learning circles students share information about themselves, their school and their community (e.g. photos, maps, music, postcards, taped messages etc.). Students were encouraged to produce 'welcome packs' which help them to think of creative ways to 'show or illustrate who they are and how their social and physical world is similar and different from that of their distant partners' (ibid:8). It is argued that such activities can provide for classroom lessons, for example, welcome packs from Canada and Saudi Arabia were used in mathematics to look at metric conversions and money exchange rates. The introductory sessions were followed by a learning circle activity, which was drawn from the curriculum and put together by students and their teacher. One such activity is of students (in Australia, USA, Denmark, Israel and Saudi Arabia) looking at the founding of their communities. Learning circles are purported to encourage students (from diverse backgrounds) to take responsibility for their learning and at the same time develop a world-wide network of friends and increased understanding of and experience of diversity and global perspectives.

Section Summary

Since it was introduced in 1988, the National Curriculum has subsequently undergone a process of revision, particularly since the late 1990s. In an attempt to acknowledge and encourage diversity through the curriculum (following the 1999 Macpherson and 2000a Parekh Reports), statutory guidance on inclusion in the National Curriculum was introduced in 1999. Essential elements in valuing pupil diversity were to ensure that pupils learned to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising from race, gender, ability or disability, and that all forms of bullying, harassment and stereotypical views are challenged. This statutory guidance was supported by a succession of reports, government and independent, that argued the need for school managers and leaders to develop an ethos and whole school approach which reflected diverse cultures and which established and maintained an inclusive school curriculum (e.g. Blair *et al.*, 1998; DfES, 2003a; DfES, 2004a/b; Ofsted, 2002; The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment, 2005; The Home Office Cantle Report on Community Cohesion, 2001). Blair *et al.* (1998) reason that if the curriculum acknowledges the diversity in British society this will help raise the achievement of minority ethnic pupils by giving them access to a more relevant curriculum (see also The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment, 2005; The Commission on African and Asian Heritage, 2005) and also be a way to counter institutional racism, a requirement of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

National Curriculum guidelines identify various ways in which specific subjects such as Mathematics, English, Geography, Modern Foreign Languages, Citizenship Education and Science can promote a greater understanding of diversity amongst pupils. This is supported by academic research, for example in mathematics Purvis and Bergstrom (2006:37) have shown that it is possible to ‘infuse classroom maths with an appreciation of shared cultures and to acknowledge the contributions made to mathematics by people of diverse ethnicities and gender the world over’ (see also Cotton, 2001; Tressider, 2006). Studies from Europe and further afield have shown the effectiveness of particular intervention initiatives in relation to diversity in a number of subject areas, as well as cross-curriculum initiatives such as virtual ‘learning circles’ in which students are encouraged to think of creative ways to ‘show or illustrate who they are and how their social and physical world is similar and different from that of their distant partners’ (Riel, 2000:8; see also Keime *et al.*, 2002; Suleiman and Moore, 1996; Fullinwider, 2001; Garcia and Lopez, 2005; Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2002).

Documentation from both the DfES and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) clearly indicates that teachers are allowed and encouraged to use professional flexibility in deciding how they deliver the curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4, which would allow a greater emphasis on diversity. However, some reports show that there is some question about the extent to which teachers are aware of this flexibility. Also the effectiveness of teacher training in relation to diversity issues has been questioned (Cline *et al.*, 2002; Davis and Crozier, 2006; Le Roux, 2002; Maylor, 2006; Ross, 2006; TDA, 2005; The Home Office Cattle Report, 2001; The Commission on African and Asian Heritage, 2005). For example, The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment (2005) felt that ‘training is not just required at the initial training stage, but throughout a teacher’s career within schools’ and that such training ‘requires greater focus on key issues [relating to diversity] and should not just be tagged on to other initiatives’ (2005:28).

Ofsted (1999) reported that schools were working within the framework of the National Curriculum to promote an understanding of diversity, but also reported that they found in some schools a ‘mismatch between the curriculum on offer and the aims they wanted to achieve in relation to the understanding and appreciation of diversity’ (Ofsted, 2000:20). There have been a number of analyses of the National Curriculum which have criticised the way in which it has adopted a Eurocentric approach and how it fails to value cultural/ethnic diversity (e.g. Appiah, 2001; Macpherson Report, 1999; Parekh Report, 2000a; The Commission on African and Asian Heritage, 2005; The GARP project 2006 [this project integrates global and anti-racist perspectives in the primary curriculum]; The Runnymede Trust, 2003). The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment (2005) highlighted concerns identified by young minority ethnic pupils about the teaching of Black history and culture in schools which it was felt had a tendency to highlight ‘differences’ and/or to ‘other’ young Black people. A number of teachers have also been described as having concerns about the perceived lack of emphasis on cultural diversity at a national level (Cline *et al.*, 2002).

The General Teaching Council for England (GTC) (2006:14) identified two main barriers to teachers' creativity [and making use of flexibility in the National curriculum] to deliver a more diverse curriculum:

- a) national testing, the nature of which encouraged some teachers to 'teach to the test', thus narrowing their teaching methods and content
- b) the way in which some school leaders and middle managers blocked the development of an ethos of flexibility, cross-curricular working and trust in teachers' skills and creativity.

Studies also show that some teachers argue that, while flexibility in the curriculum is promoted, the teaching timetable is not sufficiently flexible to enable this to happen effectively (Cline *et al.*, 2002; GTC, 2006). Other potential barriers to the effective teaching of diversity have also been identified, for example diversity not being identified as a school priority, a school emphasising global citizenship at the expense of diversity, or if a 'colour/culture' blind approach is adopted (see Cline *et al.*, 2002; Tikly *et al.*, 2006). Another significant barrier identified in the literature is the misconception that mathematics and science are objective/value free subjects and devoid of cultural reference (Powell, 1996; Schuell, 1992), therefore not lending themselves to discussions about the world and local and national contexts (see also Mendick, 2006, Povey, 2003, Skovsmose, 1994).

2. HOW SOCIAL IDENTITIES ARE CONSTRUCTED

Before moving on to look at British Identities and the curriculum, this section and the next (section 3) provide a background by outlining some of the literature relating to the theoretical construction of identities.

In this section we explore the theoretical academic literature concerning the complexity of identity construction, and the ways in which constructing categories of identities inevitably lead to constructions of ‘difference’, inclusion and exclusion. In particular, we will discuss issues relating to:

- the construction of ethnic and national identities
- the construction of multiple and ‘hybrid’ identities
- identity, exclusion and cultural racism
- the role of history in shaping national identities.

The construction of ethnic and national identities

Some writers have held that social identities – particularly ‘national’ and ‘ethnic’ identities – have immutable ‘essential’ characteristics, that once acquired (at birth or in childhood) reside inside a human being as an ‘essence’ that cannot be changed (see Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005). The writings of ‘postmodernist’ theorists and of ‘social constructionist’ theorists in the last few decades have continually challenged this notion, which is now not widely held by social scientists.

According to ‘modernist’ writers such as Kedourie (1971), Gellner (1983) and Anderson (1991), the ‘nation’ arose as a political category in Western Europe and North America primarily as a result of the need for large-scale economic and social government of peoples in these increasingly complex industrialised world regions (see also Smith, 1991). In order to create and maintain this ‘state’ some sort of collective ‘solidarity’ is necessary: hence the construction of the idea of a ‘nation’ to which all governed citizens belong (Gellner, 1983; Smith, 1991). In particular, members of the ‘nation’ need to have in common a shared ‘culture’ and means of communication, in order for the complicated machinations of the society to function. This the ‘state’ provides by organising similar forms of education and other means of socialisation. A similar shared ‘culture’ and language then reinforces the sense of similarity felt between members of the nation, and thus creates a sense of or an imagined ‘national’ identity (Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1983).

This explanation is sometimes criticised by those who point out that it does not explain feelings of national identity and nationalist movements of peoples who do not at present have their own government. Moreover, Anthias and Yuval-Davis, Kymlicka and others point out that it is rare for states to preside over a single homogenous ‘national’ group – most countries comprise a plurality of ‘national’ and ethnic collectivities (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992; Kymlicka, 1995). An alternative approach to the analysis of ‘national’ identity is provided by social constructionist writers such as Berger and

Luckman (1966), Jackson and Penrose (1993) and Jenkins (1996) (see also Eriksen, 1993; Hall, 1996), who see *all* human identities – including ethnic as well as national identities – as social constructions. Human beings construct ‘categories’ of ideas and phenomena in order to understand the world, which then gain legitimacy and general acceptance by appearing as ‘natural’ rather than socially constructed (Jackson and Penrose, 1993). Individuals then draw on these category constructions to create a sense of ‘identity’ – i.e. to develop an understanding of what they themselves are in relation to the rest of the world. One of the strongest categories of social identification is what is termed ‘ethnic’ identity, defined by Eriksen (1993) as:

An aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as *culturally distinctive* from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction, It can thus be also defined as a social identity... characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship (Eriksen, 1993:12 – our emphasis).

For Penrose, Hall and other constructionists, national identities can be explained as particular forms of ethnic identities centred around an idea of the right to collective self-governance and often relating to a particular geographical territory where members of the ‘nation’ reside and which they stake a claim of collective ‘ownership’ and ‘belonging’ (Fenton, 2003; Hall, 1996; Jenkins, 1998).

Whilst identities are socially constructed, this does not mean to say that individuals have total freedom to ‘choose’ aspects of their identity. As Jenkins (1996) notes, the construction of identity is based as much on the ways in which external others categorise a person, as how the individual categorises him/herself:

What people think about us is no less important than what we think about ourselves. It is not enough to assert an identity. That identity must also be validated (or not) by those with whom we have dealings. Social identity is never unilateral. (Jenkins, 1996:21)

External authorities can have the power to influence the self-definition of an individual, and external ‘labels’ which have not been personally appropriated or internalised by a person can often still have the power to influence their lived experience (Jenkins, 1996).

Multiple and ‘hybrid’ identities

At any one time, human beings hold ‘multiple’ socially constructed identities – for example gender, ‘ethnic’, local, national, political, as well as those based on social categorisations of characteristics such as age, (dis)ability and sexuality. It is not uncommon for individuals to hold multiple identities of the same type i.e. dual ‘national’ or ‘ethnic’ identities (Caglar, 1997; Hashim, 1996). As Parekh notes, ‘more and more people have multiple identities – they are Welsh Europeans, Pakistani Yorkshirewomen, Glaswegian Muslims, English Jews and Black British’ (Parekh, 2000a). Sen (2006) has

recently pointed to the fallacy that an individual can be described in terms of a singular identity.

Sometimes 'new' identities are constructed in reaction to a lack of identification with socially existing categories. For example, in a study of people of mixed Sudanese and British origin, Hashim (1996) notes how structures of gender inequality in Sudanese society, as well as Sudanese perceptions that those of 'mixed heritage' are not 'really' Sudanese, worked as constraining influences on their choices of ethnic identification:

The women [in the study] were unable to embrace a Sudanese identity in the manner in which the men did, as rather than bring them privilege it entailed giving up certain freedoms their Western heritage permitted. In addition, social perceptions of their mixed heritage constantly reminded them that they were, to a certain degree, excluded from a Sudanese identity whatever their subjective choices. (Hashim, 1996:31)

Moreover, racism experienced whilst in the UK caused some women in the study to feel unable to identify themselves alternatively as British, leading to their construction of a 'new' identity different from both (Hashim, 1996).

The notion of 'hybridity' – the 'mixedness' of different 'ethnic' or cultural heritages, has gone through a social transformation, from a racist concept (especially the implication that such 'mixedness' would impact negatively on the self-esteem and psychological 'health' of a person) to a positive reclamation: 'hybridity now refers to the mixing of people of 'colour', and has now been reclaimed to denote the privileged, positive and creative space of difference such people occupy' (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005:18; see also Hall, 1996; Modood and Werbner, 1997).

As well as holding multiple, changing identities, a person who holds a specific identity may experience it very differently from another, and we must not forget that there is also significant, and constantly changing, differences *between* people who hold, for example, the same ethnic identity, especially for example the significant divergences in experience due to gender or class difference, and differences in material wealth (Mirza, 2003; Social Exclusion Unit, 1998; Vertovec, 1999). Such identities should not lead us to unproblematically see groups of people as homogenous entities characterised by a fixed, unchanging 'sameness' of outlook or experience (Parekh, 2000a; Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005). These various multiple identities are thus contingent and different identities amongst them may be more pronounced in different localities and different times (Ross and Kryzywosz-Rynkiewicz, 2004).

Identity, exclusion and cultural racism

Parekh (2000b) and others have noted the particular importance of a shared sense of national identity in a multicultural society, 'because of its greater need to cultivate a common sense of belonging among its diverse communities' (Parekh, 2000b:231). However, all forms of identity, including national identities, *exclude* as much as they

include. The formation of an idea of ‘sameness’ between certain people also at the same time sets up a barrier between those who are the ‘same’ and those who are ‘different’ (Barth, 1969; Eriksen, 1993; Jenkins, 1996). This is exacerbated by popular beliefs that such categories are ‘natural’. As mentioned before, forms of ‘ethnic’ and ‘national’ identity – and the definitions of geographic territory or ‘place’ on which they may be based – are not ‘natural’ but socially constructed and forever fluid and changing. However, the strength of such identities rests on the popular conception that they are ‘natural’ and unchanging. Penrose (1993) and others argue that the need to deny such fluidity leads to the social marginalisation of those ‘who do *not* fit into the ...nation’s self-construction’ (Penrose, 1993:31 - original emphasis).

This includes those who hold an ‘ethnic’ or ‘national’ identity not equated with that of the dominant group in a nation-state (see Eriksen, 1993). Gilroy, Solomos and others have shown that contemporary racism is based primarily on the basis of ethnicity (see Gilroy, 1993; Solomos and Back, 1995). Minority ethnic groups are currently seen to be ‘different’ because of their inability to fit in with constructed notions of national citizenship, and are excluded or discriminated against due to their categorisation as ethnically or culturally different, rather than, as in previous times, by recourse to a discourse of biologically innate ‘superiority’ and ‘inferiority’ of ‘races’ (Gilroy, 1993; see also Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005; Hebdige, 1996; Jenkins and Sofos, 1996). (The specific case of the UK will be explored below in section 3). These new distinctions located primarily in conceptions of ‘culture’ have meant that White ethnicities such as those of Irish, East European and Jewish origin can also be subject to such forms of exclusion and discrimination (Back and Solomos, 2000).

The role of history in shaping national identities

History (or, at least, particular *constructions* of the past) is very important in identity formation and maintenance, as it can lend legitimacy to identities by giving them the appearance of timeless continuity and therefore an ‘essential’ or ‘natural’ quality (Eriksen, 1993; Jenkins, 1996; Read, 1996; Smith, 1991). An ethnic group or nation’s past history is often popularly constructed as ‘owned’ by each member in the form of ‘heritage’ (see Hewison, 1987). Like forms of identity, ‘heritage’ itself is also an exclusionary as well as an inclusionary concept, for the notion of history as a group’s ‘inheritance’ means ‘there are some people who are genetically not entitled to receive it’ (Bernal, 1991). As discussed above, the cultural dominance of particular ethnic or national groups within the nation-state can lead to the conflation of their interests and ‘culture’ with those of the nation-state as a whole, thus marginalising other ethnic or national groups. An ethnic group’s constructed history can be part of this cultural conflation – for example, presentations of British history in school classes, museums or in popular culture that present White/English history as if it was the history of the country as a whole (Fryer, 1984; Gilroy, 1993; Phillips and Phillips, 1998).

Yet history can (and arguably needs to) also be utilised in order to help legitimise more inclusive notions of identity. As Parekh noted in his Report on constructing an inclusive multi-ethnic British identity: ‘the forging and nurturing of such a society involves, at the

outset, reinterpreting the past' (Parekh, 2000a). Throughout this review the centrality of history - as a shaping force of both inclusionary and exclusionary identities - is a recurring theme.

Section Summary

Social identities, including national and ethnic identities, are not natural or timeless but are socially constructed. People often hold multiple and mixed ethnic and national identities, as well as other social identities based for example on religion, gender, sexuality, social class and (dis)ability. People with the same ethnic or national identity cannot be seen as homogenous groups but will also vary greatly in terms of outlook and experience. All forms of social identity exclude others as much as they include, and for example forms of national identity can often marginalise and exclude those that are not of a dominant ethnic group within a nation. Cultural racisms, forms of exclusion and prejudice based on conceptions of an ethnic group's culture, are now usually more commonplace than biological racisms based on notions of superiority of particular races. History is very important in the construction of social identities, as it provides these with a legitimacy through giving identities a sense of naturalness and inevitability. Also, representations of the past can serve equally to legitimise exclusionary or inclusive forms of identity.

3. HOW BRITISH IDENTITIES ARE CONSTRUCTED

Many academics and commentators have tried to pin down what exactly ‘Britishness’ means. However, as we have described in section 2, all forms of social identities are socially constructed, are conceived differently by different people, and are continually in a process of transition. Current constructions of ‘Britishness’ in popular currency in the UK are discussed in detail in Appendix B. In this section we will draw on current theoretical academic literature in order to explore how ‘Britishness’ is a construction that is often created through a juxtaposition with various other identities, such as the UK ‘home nation’ identities, UK minority ethnic identities, and European and global identities. We will be exploring:

- ‘Britishness’ as a social construction
- the UK ‘home nations’ and ‘Britishness’
- minority ethnic groups and ‘Britishness’
- the juxtaposition of British, European and global identities.

‘Britishness’ as a social construction

As discussed in section 2, identities are generally considered to be not natural, but are socially constructed. Moreover, whilst two people may both consider themselves ‘British’, they will often construct what ‘Britishness’ means in significantly different ways. As Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992) note, factors such as class difference, place of birth, ethnic origin and religion will greatly affect the ways in which people view the term ‘Britishness’ and the place they hold within it.

Not surprisingly, the media and cultural industries, as well as large corporations, the government and other mainstream institutions, have the capacity to represent conceptions of ‘Britishness’ that can have great influence on people’s perceptions of what ‘Britishness’ means (as well as other forms of social identity) and their own place in relation to it (see Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005; Cottle, 2000; Law, 2002; Sampson, 2004). Such constructions vary greatly – from a notion that being ‘British’ simply means that a person lives and has legal rights in the particular geographical area defined as the UK, to notions that ‘Britishness’ has particular ‘essential’ qualities that may be different from those held by other nationalities – for example the notion that (notably excluding the Northern Irish) living on an island gives Britons a character of ‘rugged independence’ (see Hebdige, 1996) or a particular sense of ‘tolerance’ and respect for ‘fair play’ (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005). Such constructions also change greatly over time (government and media presentations in the last twelve months are discussed in detail in Appendix B). Often, however, identities are constructed and conceived of more in relation to their boundaries – what they are *not*, than what they *are*.

The 'home nations' and 'Britishness'

In discussing the concept of 'Britishness', academics and political commentators are quick to mention that this form of identity was constructed as a 'category' for identification relatively recently – legally cemented only in 1707 with the Act of Union – and requiring particular catalytic forces for its legitimacy to hold in the disparate minds of its citizens:

From the deliberate forging of Britons in the eighteenth century to the cementing of 'Britishness' in the twentieth century, it is the story of a historical construct. War, empire and monarchy provided much of the historical and symbolic glue. (Gamble and Wright, 2000:1. See also Colley, 1992; Parekh, 2000a)

Gamble and Wright (2000) go on to note that the twentieth century was 'the British century', with the solidarity engendered by factors such as the rallying against invasion in World War Two, and the Festival of Britain in 1951, doing much to cement the concept of British national identity (Gamble and Wright, 2000; Ramsden, 2006). Now, they argue, we are beginning to see the glue disintegrate – unifying factors such as the monarchy are beginning to lose their popularity, whilst power is being increasingly devolved to the individual 'home nations': 'with governments and parliaments in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, it is no longer possible (even for the English) to miss the fact of a multinational kingdom' (Gamble and Wright, 2000:1).

The barb 'even for the English' in the above quotation highlights one important aspect of the construction of British national identity – what is often seen as the unequal power relationship between England and the other 'home nations' that comprise the UK. As mentioned above, 'Britishness' is not a unitary agreed quality, but something that is constructed and experienced differently by people of different social positionings. Kiely *et al.* (2005), Miles (1982) and others have discussed how being British means very different things to people who also hold different 'home nation' identities within the UK. Most notably, English people have much less of a clear notion of distinction between English and British identities than Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish people, and are likely to consider both identities in an equally positive light, unlike the others. As we have stated before in section 2, this is due to the social and cultural dominance of England amongst the 'home nations', which leads many English people to equate their own ethnically specific interests and cultures with the wider nation-state as a whole:

For those living in England, therefore, this has meant that national identity is fluid and imprecise, floating between 'Englishness' and 'Britishness' because the centre of economic, political and ideological power in Britain is in London (and so England). (Miles, 1982:287, see also Morgan, 2002; Parekh, 2000a;)

British history is also often perceived differently by those from the different nations in the UK:

The dominant national story in England includes Agincourt, Trafalgar, Mafeking, the Somme and Dunkirk. There are alternative versions of national history in

Scotland and Wales, and in Black and Asian communities. The 1990s film *Braveheart* was a vivid popular reminder that the Scottish sense of national story (as conceived by an Australian director resident in the United States) is not only different from but also opposed to the dominant English self-understanding. Similarly, Irish versions of British history are different from those held by many English people. (Parekh, 2000a:16; see also Ken Loach's film 'The Wind that Shakes the Barley', details at:<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0460989>)

Such differences, and the political 'loadedness' of the notion of 'Britain' has led Parekh (2000a) and others to assert that a new term is needed to encompass 'the supranational entity' known as 'these islands':

Perhaps one day there will be an adjective to refer to this entity, similar in power perhaps to the unifying word 'Nordic' in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. But for the present no such adjective is in sight. It is entirely plain, however, that the word 'British' will never do on its own. (Parekh, 2000a:38)

Minority ethnic groups and 'Britishness'

'Immigration controls and nationality legislation are what define, both symbolically and actually, the boundaries of the national collectivity' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). From the Act of Union in 1707 to comparatively recently with the Nationality Law in 1981, British citizenship has been legally conceptualised primarily in a conception of binding loyalty to the British monarch, and thus the 'British' people were deemed 'subjects' of the monarchy rather than as 'citizens'. Throughout the growth of the British Empire, the British government unproblematically classified all the populations of Empire countries as 'British subjects' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). However, from the turn of the twentieth century, and especially after World War Two, increasing migration of peoples from former Empire countries to the UK was accompanied by more exclusionary measures on the right to citizenship and settlement, such as the 1905 Aliens Act, the Commonwealth Immigrants Acts of 1962 and 1968, and the Immigration Act of 1971. As well as legally redefining British subjects as 'citizens', the 1981 Nationality Law placed even greater restrictions on who could be classified as British Nationals – from now on even if a person was born in the country they would not be allowed to live permanently in the UK unless their parents were either British citizens themselves or were legal residents. The official underlying political stance of the then Conservative Government was that nationality legislation served to protect and preserve the 'British way of life' – something that was implicitly seen as 'natural' and under threat from those of 'other cultures' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). The continuing lack of restrictions on immigration from Ireland and the then European Economic Community (EEC) countries have led many commentators to note the racialised nature of such exclusions, the concept of 'acceptable' 'Britishness' seemingly implicitly equated in such policies with 'Whiteness' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). Restrictions have been further defined and developed in the 1988 Immigration Act, the 1993 Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act, the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act and the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act.

As mentioned above, members of a *dominant* ethnic group often implicitly or explicitly equate their own ethnicity unproblematically with the ‘nation-state’, and will often have a much less fully formed conception of their own specific *ethnicity* than those who are constantly reminded of their ‘otherness’ (Eriksen, 1993; Jackson and Penrose, 1993). Moreover, as Dyer (1997), Lipsitz (1998), Nakayama and Martin (1999), Puwar (2000) and others have noted, ‘White’ people tend to under-examine their ‘Whiteness’, conflating ‘White’ needs and concerns with those of humanity as a whole. Notions of ‘Whiteness’ and ‘Blackness’ are themselves historically and socially constructed categories based on a large variety of phenotypical features, most notably skin colour (Dyer, 1997; Hall, 1996). In the UK notions of common ‘racial’ identity based on ‘Whiteness’ was historically used to establish a common ‘British’ imperial identity amongst the separate ‘nations’ (Dyer, 1997). In contemporary times British identity can still exclude on the lines of ‘race’ – ‘race’ or ethnicity now being equated with cultural rather than ‘biological’ difference:

The [contemporary] emphasis on culture allows nation and race to fuse. Nationalism and racism become so closely identified that to speak of the nation is to speak automatically in racially exclusive terms. Blackness and Englishness are constructed as incompatible, mutually exclusive identities. To speak of the British or English people is to speak of the *White* people. (Gilroy, 1993:27-28- original emphasis)

Religion also plays a powerful exclusionary role in the construction of British identity – the UK is legally as well as culturally constructed as a Protestant Christian country. The Queen is the symbolic head of the churches of England and Scotland; the Churches’ two archbishops and twenty-four bishops are members of the House of Lords; and it is the duty of the British Prime Minister to appoint the Archbishop of Canterbury. Moreover the Blasphemy Law in the UK applies only to the Christian Church, and the 1988 Education Reform Act legally requires each state school to conduct a daily act of Christian worship (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). Anthias and Yuval-Davis note:

This construction assumes a correspondence of national and religious identity, which means that non-established churches and especially non-Christians, can only be partial members of the British national collectivity. They are defined to a lesser or greater extent as outsiders. In multi-cultural education programmes in British schools, it is the different religions, especially the different religious celebrations and holidays, which have come to signify cultural differences. (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992:54-55)

Moreover, since the ‘Rushdie affair’, the Gulf Wars, July 7th 2005 in the UK (and the Al-Qaeda attacks of September 11th 2001 in the USA) British national identity has increasingly been popularly constructed as culturally Christian with Islam as the non-British, non-western ‘other’ (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992; Modood, 1990; see also Huntington, 1996).

The juxtaposition of British, European and Global identities

Rapid technological innovations including instantaneous global communications, and increasing liberalisation of world trade have contributed to today's globalised society, where nations around the world are increasingly interdependent (Castles, 1996). Such interdependence has been argued to threaten the sovereignty and cultural specificity of particular nations. In reaction to such perceived 'threat' and/or in relation to a perceived necessity to sell a nation's unique skills and attributes in a global marketplace, the forms national identities take are increasingly being influenced by the need to define national difference and uniqueness on a global scale, rather than amongst more immediate geographical neighbours, or along the boundaries of Empire (Corner and Harvey, 1991; Held *et al.*, 1999; Parekh, 2000a).

Conversely, nations are also continually defining and aligning themselves as having greater *similarity* to some countries than others, creating continually changing forms of inclusion and exclusion based on perceived cultural, political and economic lines. Since Britain joined the Common Market the country has increasingly shifted from positioning itself primarily as a member of the global Commonwealth to attempts to assert a more European identity as part of the currently defined European Union (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). However, as Parekh (2000a) and others have noted, such an identity has often been popularly and politically resisted:

'Britishness' has been most effectively described negatively, in terms of what it is not – especially not 'European'. Euroscepticism is not so much a considered policy as gut nationalism, a refusal to accept the full implications of Britain's increasingly close ties with other European countries. (Parekh, 2000a:24)

Interestingly, Smith (2006:433) argues that it is specifically *England* where such opposition is acute, particularly due to the insularity of English historical dealings with Europe, especially the sense of separateness due to Protestantism which contrasts with 'the transterritorialism of Christendom characteristic of the leading Roman Catholic powers'. In contrast, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish attitudes towards greater ties and identity with Europe are much more positive (Smith, 2006).

Finally, in contrast with such popular identifications, educationalists have increasingly called for the promotion of alternative 'global' identities in contrast with more exclusionary national/regional identities. Brownlie (2001) for example argues:

In order to live and participate effectively in [a globalised] society young people need to learn about these global aspects and how they impact on their lives and how their actions impact on others, often in faraway places. This entails learning about other countries, religions and cultures, to understand others, yes, but equally to understand ourselves, our own lives and the lives of those immediately around us . . . without a global perspective citizenship education does not make sense. (Brownlie, 2001:21)

Section Summary

‘Britishness’, and other forms of social identity, are most often constructed and conceived of in relation to their boundaries – what they are *not*, than what they *are*. Members of a dominant ethnic group – in the UK, the English – often unproblematically conflate their own identity with the nation as a whole, thus excluding other groups such as the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish, and contributing to their feelings of marginalisation. British national identity has been continually legally redefined in relation to those perceived as ‘other’, in particular those living in former countries of the Empire who wish to settle in the UK, and minority ethnic groups living in the UK. ‘Britishness’ is also often popularly equated with Whiteness and also with Christianity, in particular after the attacks of July 7th 2005 in the UK and September 11th 2001 in the USA. British identity is also being continually redefined in relation to other countries and alignments of nations around the globe, most recently in its problematic relationship with the other members of the European Union. Progressive educationalists often emphasise the need for British identity to be defined in relation to, and complementing, a common global identity.

4. NATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITIES IN THE CURRICULUM

This section moves from the theorisation of identities to the ways in which the National Curriculum supports the individual and the development of his/her sense of individual and national identities.

Wherever we come from, whatever our roots, or our faith, we have a stake in being British and we can be proud of that. Celebrating diversity and building a fairer, more confident multicultural nation with a fresh, strong sense of national identity is ... important. (Home Secretary, 17th March 1999, quoted by the TTA, 2000:7 in their guidance on resources and materials for initial teacher trainers on raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils)

The National Curriculum states that it seeks to promote individual and national identities by contributing 'to the development of pupils' sense of identity through knowledge and understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural heritages of Britain's diverse society and of the local, national, European, commonwealth and global dimensions of their lives' (NCC, 1999:11/online). This is also explicit in the Citizenship Statutory Order for Key Stages 3 and 4 (DfES/QCA, 1999). There is an expectation that pupils will come to understand and be comfortable with their own identity and the notion of 'multiple identities'. According to the DfES (2004):

Pupils' need to know and feel confident in their own identity, but also be open to change and development, and to be able to engage positively with other identities. All pupils need to be comfortable with the concept of multiple identity and with hyphenated terms such as Black-British, British-Muslim and English-British (DfES, 2004a:21).

Sen (2006) has recently highlighted the multidimensionality of human identities, and warns against forcing people into 'singular boxes of identity' which he argues may have divisive effects. This view is supported by Le Roux (2002:37) who is concerned that minority ethnic 'cultural goods' are not 'sacrificed for the sake of maintaining and fostering the dominant culture' or identity. Similarly, the Citizenship Foundation (2003, 2006) strongly suggests that when developing ideas of national identity amongst pupils it is imperative that the curriculum does not impose a single view of what it means to be 'English' and/or 'British' and that pupils are given opportunities to recognise the complexity of the term 'Britishness'. The Foundation argues that such a comprehension would allow pupils 'whatever their primary cultures and values to become knowledgeable and competent citizens' (Citizenship Foundation, 2003:22). They suggest that the notion of *identity* is more useful than *nationality* in any exploration of 'Britishness'. Students should develop a good understanding of multiple and changing identities and 'how they engage these identities': this should help pupils to 'reconcile personal or private values with those of the public community' (Citizenship Foundation, 2003:22). Le Roux (2002:42) considers it salient that individuals comprehend that even those who share a common culture and language do not necessarily share the same

beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviours, and that it is not just culture, but ‘socio-economic status, educational background, religion, gender, age, world-view’ which ‘influence *who* and *what* we are’ (2002:42). Whilst Tate (2005:14) is in favour of the recognition and celebration of cultural differences as a way of strengthening national unity, he is wary of diversity being emphasised too much as this can undermine a common sense of purpose, considered essential for the development of an ‘effective nation state’.

Some DfES documents argue that a sense of belonging to Britain and that ‘Britain belongs to me’ can be ‘developed in all arts and humanities subjects, in citizenship education and in PSHE’, and that it also ‘can be implicit in some of the examples, reference points and case studies in mathematics, science and technology’ (DfES, 2004a:21). Other DfES publications emphasise developing awareness of global communities (DfES, 2004c, 2005a; cf. proposed changes to 11-14 curriculum). Often pupils are encouraged to see themselves in ‘global’, rather than ‘national/British’ terms; an approach demonstrated by schools which adopt a ‘one world’ approach to diversity through the curriculum (Ofsted, 2002). This more global approach may be more in line with the ways in which some pupils perceive themselves. For example, Demie (2005) identified a wide variety of identities amongst Black pupils: though some pupils made reference to being ‘British’, there were also other identities such as: ‘Jamaican English with Canadian and American connections’ and ‘Jamaican English with Maltese connections’. Some analyses that dissect the category of ‘British’ and which people are encompassed within this (including peoples of English, Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh descent; British-Asian - e.g. Pakistani-British, Bangladeshi-British; Black British and pupils from mixed heritage backgrounds) suggest that such descriptions disrupt simplistic notions of past and present (Rassool, 1999) or of a White British norm (Tikly *et al.*, 2004).

It has been argued that if nations are constructed (see Colley, 1992, Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983), decisions of whom should be included and excluded in the understanding of British identities cannot be left to decisions at school level. Developing the ideas that ‘Britain belongs to me’ may be undermined for many pupils by the racism they encounter in schools. Cole and Stuart (2005:363), in their study of student teacher experiences, found a ‘significant degree of racism, xenophobia and ignorance in [mainly White] schools’ (see also Cline *et al.*, 2002; Gaine, 2005). To counter this they advocate ‘a critical analysis of imperialism, past and present’ in the National Curriculum, to help inform pupils ‘more precisely about the historical and contemporary nature of British society’ (Cole and Stuart, 2005:363). Similarly, John (2006) and the Commission on African and Asian heritage (2005) argue that despite inclusive discourses on citizenship, fundamental issues of the rooting of identity, belonging and understanding ‘difference’ and the contributions of different communities to the development of British society are ignored in education.

Recognising ethnic/cultural/national identity in the school curriculum

Blair *et al.* (1998:8-9) reported how some multiethnic schools were sensitive to the identities of students, and included in the curriculum pupils' 'histories, languages, religions and cultures'. Other contrasting evidence is reported by Cline *et al.* (2002) who suggest that in mainly White schools teachers adopt a 'colour/culture blind' approach to minority ethnic children. Teachers described how they treated everyone equally, which perhaps reflects the emphasis on equal opportunities in education (Burtonwood, 2002) and a lack of understanding by some of the impact of racism on the education of minority ethnic pupils (Rattansi, 1999). Similarly, Tikly *et al.* (2004:62), in their study of mixed heritage pupils, found what they described as a 'distinct lack of formal and informal inclusion of minority ethnic people within the curriculum and general school environment'. They reported that even in those schools where diversity was acknowledged, this did not apply to mixed heritage identities, even when the mixed heritage population was one of the largest minority ethnic pupil groups in the particular school. According to Tikly *et al.* (2004:165), teachers' uncertainties about the treatment of all minority ethnic groups was 'most acute' with children from mixed heritage backgrounds, so that at times teachers 'forced' mixed heritage children into an 'inappropriate White British norm'.

Ofsted (2002) found that whilst some secondary teachers were assured in handling questions of ethnicity, and whilst subjects like Religious Education and English literature reflected diverse cultures, 'more could be done [through the curriculum] to enable pupils to learn systematically about other cultures' (2002:3). They felt that the curriculum employed in some schools 'did not do enough to explore the connections that link individuals to a variety of local, national and international points of reference which, collectively, help to define personal and community identity' (2002:20-1). Some staff were reported as seeing such curriculum planning as 'complicated' and 'risky'. To address this, Ofsted (2002) recommended schools using the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to reflect ethnic, cultural and national diversity in the curriculum, teaching and assessment. Ofsted also pointed to the need for schools to develop teacher confidence in approaching ethnic diversity.

Another Ofsted report (2000:15) noted that African-Caribbean pupils wanted schools to have 'an understanding of their feelings about ethnicity, colour and racism'. Cline *et al.* (2002) found that while minority ethnic pupils would like to see their ethnic identities expressed more fully and openly at school, it was likely that these pupils would not have their identities promoted, because most teachers in these schools lacked knowledge of cultural and ethnic diversity, and tended to minimise the value and significance of such diversity - 'it really doesn't impinge, it's just ideas, it's just knowledge' (Cline *et al.*, 2002:97-98; see also Cleaver *et al.*, 2005). Some White teachers were reported as unwilling to include cultural diversity in their teaching because they 'perceive the area as a hot potato or of political correctness, and therefore they would be very wary of leaping across in the wrong way and be seen to be prejudiced in some way ... or being accused of being incorrect' (Cline *et al.*, 2002:97-98). Pollock (2004) while acknowledging teachers' failure to talk about 'race' for fear of being racist, suggests that such avoidance can lead

to pupils being homogenised with their individual diversities unrecognised, and societal inequalities based on ethnic categorisations going undiscussed.

It should also be noted that some minority ethnic pupils prefer not to have issues of 'race' and ethnicity discussed in the classroom, because they feel this could raise difficult issues with their teacher and other pupils (Ofsted, 2002; The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment, 2005). Notwithstanding this, it is important that ethnic identities are explored in school because, as Gaine (1995) notes, 'almost all pupils, in all parts of the country, have considerable levels of confusion, misunderstanding, learned misinformation and ignorance about 'race'' (cited by Cline *et al.*, 2002:9; see also Gaine, 2005). Others have observed situations in which pupils of mixed heritage have their multiple identities recognised and understood within a wider context of societal and school diversity, where mixed identities are increasingly common (DfES, 2006b).

Ofsted (2002:20) also report teachers and pupils suggesting that the history curriculum should tackle controversial issues 'so that young people feel confident in dealing with challenges to their identity and aspirations encountered in society at large'. The Commission on African and Asian Heritage (2005:61) argued that the National Curriculum should be further revised to include the histories and heritages of diverse communities if 'multiracial communities ... are to feel appreciated, acknowledged and empowered to play active and affirmative roles as citizens' in Britain.

Section Summary

The National Curriculum states that it seeks to promote individual and national identities by contributing 'to the development of pupils' sense of identity through knowledge and understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural heritages of Britain's diverse society and of the local, national, European, commonwealth and global dimensions of their lives' (NCC, 1999:11). This is also explicit in the Citizenship Statutory Order for Key Stages 3 and 4 (DfES/QCA, 1999). Some DfES documents argue that a sense of belonging to Britain and that 'Britain belongs to me' can be developed in all arts and humanities subjects, in citizenship education and in PSHE, and that it also 'can be implicit in some of the examples, reference points and case studies in mathematics, science and technology' (DfES, 2004a:21). Other DfES publications emphasise developing awareness of global communities (DfES, 2004c, 2005a).

Researchers have suggested that it is imperative that the curriculum does not impose a single view of what it means to be 'English' and/or 'British', but notes the complexity of the term (Breslin *et al.*, 2006; Citizenship Foundation, 2003; Le Roux, 2002; Sen, 2006). Le Roux (2004) states that it is vital individuals comprehend that even those who share a common culture and language do not necessarily share the same beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviours, and that it is not just culture, but 'socio-economic status, educational background, religion, gender, age, world-view' and many other things which 'influence *who* and *what* we are' (Le Roux, 2004:42 – author emphasis). The literature also indicates that the construction of a British identity may be undermined for many pupils

by the racism they encounter in schools (Cline *et al.*, 2002; Cole and Stuart, 2005; Gaine, 2005). John (2006) and the Commission on African and Asian heritage (2005) argue that despite inclusive discourses on citizenship, fundamental issues of the rooting of identity, belonging and understanding ‘difference’ and the contributions of different communities to the development of British society are ignored in education. To counter these factors, Cole and Stuart (2005:363) advocate ‘a critical analysis of imperialism, past and present’ in the National Curriculum, to help inform pupils ‘more precisely about the historical and contemporary nature of British society’.

Whilst some multiethnic schools were sensitive to the identities of students (Blair *et al.*, 1998) other schools, especially mainly White schools, adopt a ‘colour/culture blind’ approach to minority ethnic children (Cline *et al.*, 2002; Burtonwood, 2002). Ofsted found that whilst some secondary teachers were assured in handling questions of ethnicity, and whilst subjects like Religious Education and English literature reflected diverse cultures, ‘more could be done [through the curriculum] to enable pupils to learn systematically about other cultures’ (2002:3). Some staff were reported as seeing such curriculum planning as ‘complicated’ and ‘risky’ (see also Cline *et al.*, 2002; Cleaver *et al.*, 2005). To address this, Ofsted (2002) recommended schools using the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to reflect ethnic, cultural and national diversity in the curriculum, teaching and assessment. Pollock (2004) while acknowledging teachers’ failure to talk about race for fear of being racist, suggests that such avoidance can lead to pupils being homogenised and societal inequalities based on ethnic categorisations going undiscussed.

Another Ofsted report (2000:15) noted that African-Caribbean pupils wanted schools to have ‘an understanding of their feelings about ethnicity colour and racism’. It should also be noted that some minority ethnic pupils prefer not to have issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity discussed in the classroom, because they feel this could raise difficult issues with their teacher and other pupils (Ofsted, 2002; The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Ethnicity and Gender Educational Attainment, 2005). Notwithstanding this, it is important that ethnic identities are explored in school because, as Cline *et al.* (2002:9) note, ‘almost all pupils, in all parts of the country, have considerable levels of confusion, misunderstanding, learned misinformation and ignorance about ‘race’ (see also Gaine, 2005).

5. DEVELOPING BRITISH IDENTITIES AND SHARED VALUES THROUGH THE CITIZENSHIP CURRICULUM

The following sections focus on specific curriculum subjects in relation to the development of identity. Section 6 focuses on history, whilst section 7 deals with mathematics. This section explores what is meant by citizenship education in England, and how this is articulated in citizenship education/PSHE in relation to national identity, the promotion of shared values and the development of British identities.

Citizenship education became a statutory component of the National Curriculum from September 2002. It is linked to the curriculum for PSHE in Key Stages 1 and 2, and is an independent subject in Key Stages 3 and 4. The stated aims of the subject are to educate all pupils to develop social and moral responsibility, political literacy and to become active and responsible citizens.

Promoting citizenship and shared values

Several authors have written on the salience of promoting citizenship and developing an understanding of shared values in culturally diverse societies (e.g. Banks *et al.*, 2005; Figureoa, 2000; McLaughlin, 2000; Osler and Starkey, 2005; Parekh, 2000a; Ross, 2001). An international consensus panel on education for global citizenship in contexts of diversity led by Banks *et al.*, 2005 concluded that individuals needed to be educated to understand the tension that exists between achieving unity within diverse communities:

Multicultural societies are faced with the problem of creating nation-states that recognise and incorporate the diversity of their citizens and embrace an overarching set of shared values, ideals, and goals to which all citizens are committed. Only when a nation-state is unified around a set of democratic values such as human rights, justice and equality can it secure the liberties of cultural, ethnic, language, and religious groups and enable them to experience freedom, justice and peace. Citizens who understand this unity-diversity tension and act accordingly do not materialise from thin air; they are educated for it. (Banks *et al.*, 2005:7)

The revised National Curriculum in 2000 for England was intended to ‘recognise a broad set of common values and purposes that underpin the school curriculum and the work of schools’ (NCC, 1999:10/online). These values were intended to underpin the development of pupils’ social and moral responsibility, involvement in the community, the development of effective relationships, knowledge and understanding of society and respect for others. The intention has been described as to secure commitment to the values of truth, justice, honesty, trust and a sense of [national] duty (Arthur, 2003).

British diversity is promoted through citizenship education and the PSHE curriculum. By Key Stage 4 pupils are expected to have developed knowledge and understanding about our shared humanity (differences and similarities) and ‘the range of national, regional,

religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom’ and ‘to think about the lives of people living in other places and times, and people with different types of values and customs’ (Key Stages 4, 2g and i, and 4b - National Curriculum on-line, www.nc.uk). Pupils are required to develop an understanding of prejudice, racism and how to challenge stereotypes. They will also need to consider ‘social and moral dilemmas that they come across in life (e.g. how to encourage respect and understanding between different races and dealing with harassment - 5f, National Curriculum on-line, *ibid.*). As well as in PSHE and citizenship education, Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils are expected to develop an understanding of these issues in history and English literature (DfES, 2004). The Religious Education curriculum provides opportunities for Key Stage 1 pupils, for example, to reflect on their own beliefs and experiences and develop a sense of belonging and why belonging is important, whilst the art curriculum allows for an exploration of personal, cultural and social identity.

The programmes of study for Key Stages 3 and 4 focus on self-development, by helping pupils to ‘recognise... their worth as individuals by identifying things about themselves’ and feeling positive about themselves, and promoting social cohesion by helping pupils to ‘realise the consequences of antisocial behaviours, such as bullying and racism’; ‘that there are different kinds of responsibilities, rights and duties at home, at school and in the community...’; to ‘reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues’ and ‘using imagination to understand other people’s experiences’. Pupils are also encouraged to be responsible and to participate in the school’s decision-making process, develop relationships through work and play’ (National Curriculum on-line, *ibid.*).

Delivering citizenship education in schools

Kerr *et al.* (2004) identified four types of approach to delivering citizenship education nationally: ‘Progressing schools’ – these schools were defined as developing citizenship education in the curriculum and wider community. They are purported to have the most positive school ethos on citizenship and were regarded as the most advanced in terms of citizenship education provision; ‘Focused schools’ – concentrate on developing citizenship education in the curriculum with few opportunities for active citizenship in the school and wider community; while ‘Minimalist schools’ – are at an early stage of developing citizenship education, with a limited range of delivery approaches and with few extra-curricular activities. ‘Implicit schools’ – did not focus explicitly on citizenship education in the curriculum but did provide opportunities for active citizenship, and with a greater focus on citizenship within the curriculum they have the potential to become progressing schools. Kerr *et al.* (2004; 2006) advocate a whole school approach including the curriculum, community and culture of the school.

Writing in 2001, Davies raised some interesting concerns in relation to citizenship and citizenship education, first, ‘how is ‘difference’ to be conceptualised i.e. is citizenship education about education for ‘tolerance’ (of all faiths, creeds, cultures, practices) or is it about providing a basis for discrimination and tolerance of certain injustices or violations of rights?’ Secondly, ‘how does citizenship education resolve the key question of ‘difference’ and how is ‘difference’ recognised and validated and inequality challenged?’

Thirdly, ‘does citizenship education acknowledge the contradictory functions of the school – on the one hand, to foster compliance, obedience, a socialisation into social norms and citizen duties; on the other, to encourage autonomy, critical thinking and the citizen challenge to social justice?’ Fourthly, ‘will teachers see their role as socialisation into loyal citizenship and tolerance, or will they themselves be radical actors?’ Finally, ‘can an essentially individualistic and competitive schooling really provide the basis for the collective, mutual action needed for the redistributive politics to tackle inequality?’ (Davies, 2001:302).

Arthur (2003) has similarly questioned how schools can ensure that pupils comprehend how to be tolerant and ‘act by a moral code’. Davies (2001:306) suggests that if schools are to facilitate individual identities and help establish collective skills ‘then some visionary change is necessary’ (see also Osler and Starkey, 2005).

A good grounding in diversity is considered paramount in promoting shared values and facilitating social cohesion, as this requires collaborating effectively with people from diverse groups (The Home Office Cante Report, 2001). Suleiman and Moore (1996) argue that when promoting shared values and social cohesion teachers bring their own perceptions and values to their approaches to teaching, which may affect what is taught. They further argue that the values of pupils vary in terms of their own cultural and linguistic norms, and as such may impact on their understanding and learning, and their propensity towards developing an understanding of shared values and social cohesion. According to Watson (2004:266) ‘citizenship education is both the promotion of (assumed) common values (freedom, responsibility, honesty), irrespective of class, sex, gender, ethnicity, culture or religion) and, at the same time, is about encouraging young people to acquire the skills to question and evaluate values’. This presents Watson with a problem and that is, ‘how do you do the latter based on an assumption of the former?’ (2004:266).

National identity and citizenship

According to the QCA the main aim for the whole community should be ‘to find or restore a sense of common citizenship, including a national identity that is secure enough to find a place for the plurality of cultures, ethnic identities and religions long found in the UK’ (QCA, 1998:3.1, 3.14).

Notions of British citizenship focus on national identity but citizenship is itself complex and contested (e.g. local versus regional, national and global) and affected by the movement of peoples into Britain and perceptions of British identities. Arguably, ‘national identity’ and citizenship discounts hybrid and transnational identities and operates to the exclusion of local/regional identities. Such understandings led Osler and Starkey to question how a common ‘national identity’ can account for pupils’ own perceptions of identity, ‘difference’ and citizenship and the constant renegotiation of identities (Osler and Starkey, 2000; see also Osler 2000). They argue that it is the core values of British democracy together with a commitment to antiracism and the study of

universal human rights, 'rather than a narrowly defined sense of national identity that [will] enable social cohesion' (quoted in Ofsted, 2006:13).

Factors affecting the promotion of shared values and development of British identities

Several reports (including the on-going DfES longitudinal study 2001-2009 involving over 300 secondary schools) on the delivery of citizenship education in schools have drawn attention to a number of issues that may impact on the promotion of shared British values and British identities. Some of these are explored below.

There appears to be a lack of clarity in some schools as to the aims and goals of citizenship education and the roles of schools, teachers and the curriculum in achieving this. In a recent report, Ofsted (2006:10) noted that in some secondary schools citizenship education is 'invisible in the curriculum' and that where it is taught there is a lack of dedicated curriculum time for citizenship education (Ireland *et al.*, 2006; Ofsted, 2006). It would seem that citizenship education is also being taught in some secondary schools without appropriate senior management support, by teachers who lack sufficient professional knowledge of citizenship education and familiarity with the curriculum, and who are not necessarily committed to teaching the subject (Cleaver *et al.*, 2005; Kerr *et al.*, 2004). In the sample of schools they surveyed, Ofsted (2006) found that most of the citizenship education lessons were being delivered by non-specialists whose subject knowledge was insecure, particularly where citizenship education is taught through other subjects. Ofsted acknowledged the need for more specialist teachers in secondary schools (see also Breslin *et al.*, 2006).

Breslin *et al.* (2006:16) further suggest that the non-statutory nature of citizenship education in primary schools has led to citizenship education being 'under recognised and under-developed'. They fear that such lack of recognition will have implications for pupils' understanding, especially as pupils are known to develop an understanding of citizenship from an early age.

It is argued that the task of delivering a diverse curriculum (and citizenship education) becomes easier if 'the social milieu in which one lives endorses and reinforces the values that the curriculum is trying to impart' (Degazon-Johnson, 2002:9). Nevertheless, Kerr (1999:6-7) notes that countries like England (which share a commitment to pluralism, provide a framework for the 'expression of values through devolved educational structures', view citizenship as a public concern and something to be delivered through the school and formal curriculum) have traditionally adopted a 'values neutral' approach to the promotion of citizenship education. Such approaches are criticised for taking a neutral stance to values and controversial issues 'for their failure to help students to deal adequately with real-life controversial issues' (Kerr, 1999:7).

According to Ofsted (2006:13) 'the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding in Key Stage 3 and their origins and implications in Key Stage 4 are only rarely

deconstructed to explore in any detail what this implies'. This absence was considered pivotal to developing understanding about Britain, 'Britishness' and the principles and procedures that underpin British democracy.

Another factor that may affect the promotion of shared values and the development of British identities is the fact that most pupils seem to have a greater sense of belonging to their school (Cleaver *et al.*, 2005) and local communities (Osler and Starkey, 2005). Similarly Davies *et al.* (1999 - referred to by Osler and Starkey, 2005) noted a tendency amongst teachers to see their influence on the development of 'good citizenship' as less significant than families and friends. It is also evident that few consider citizenship education as leading to improved tolerance and respect for diverse groups (Kerr *et al.*, 2004).

Teachers have been found to be more comfortable talking about the environment than different cultures and ethnic groups (Ireland *et al.*, 2006; Kerr *et al.*, 2004) and racism (Cline *et al.*, 2002; Davies, 2001; Tikly *et al.*, 2004). The Citizenship Foundation (2003:4) identified several factors that may contribute to the difficulties teachers encounter when teaching about ethnic identity, racism and developing common citizenship. These include:

- a lack of understanding and knowledge about different cultures and religions – arguably contributed to by a lack of training in the area
- teachers are a part of society and have their own values and beliefs which may reinforce racism
- addressing entrenched attitudes is difficult, challenging racism can be uncomfortable for teachers especially when they feel they are only challenging the personal attitudes of White students
- teachers in mainly White schools may feel addressing issues of 'race' will single out minority ethnic students in schools as 'different' – creating divisiveness which was absent before
- teachers fear that ground rules for discussion of controversial issues, 'in which students are encouraged to express their personal opinions', cannot apply when race-related issues are debated. They fear that open discussion will legitimise pupils' racist views (2003: 4)
- teachers are wary that parents will object to antiracist education.

Section Summary

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Figureoa, 2000; McLaughlin, 2000; Osler and Starkey, 2005; Parekh, 2000a; Ross, 2001). The promotion of British diversity is highlighted both through citizenship education and the PSHE curriculum. However, schools vary widely in their approaches to delivering citizenship education and the development of understanding of diversity and shared values (Kerr *et al.*, 2004). Also, a number of researchers have highlighted potential challenges and problems to dealing with difference, diversity and shared values. For example, Davies (2001) argues that difference needs to be recognised and validated and inequality challenged (see also Arthur, 2003). Other writers have stressed, for example, the need for teachers to have a good grounding in diversity if they are to teach about shared values and facilitate social cohesion (e.g. The Home Office Cantle Report, 2001).

According to the QCA the main aim for the whole community should be ‘to find or restore a sense of common citizenship, including a national identity that is secure enough to find a place for the plurality of cultures, ethnic identities and religions long found in the UK’ (QCA, 1998:3.1, 3.14).

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Research has also identified a number of other factors that impact on the effectiveness of citizenship education in promoting shared values and the development of British identities. These include the finding that citizenship education is being taught in some schools without appropriate senior management support, and by teachers who lack sufficient professional knowledge of citizenship education and familiarity with the curriculum, and who are not necessarily committed to teaching the subject (Cleaver *et al.*, 2005; Foster, 2005; Kerr *et al.*, 2004). Also, teachers seem to be more comfortable talking about the environment than different cultures and ethnic groups (Ireland *et al.*, 2006; Kerr *et al.*, 2004; the Citizenship Foundation, 2003) [and racism – see Cline *et al.*, 2002; Davies, 2005; Tikly *et al.*, 2004]. Moreover, the Citizenship Foundation (2003) argues that teachers are a part of society and have their own values and beliefs which may reinforce rather than work against racism. Other studies show that most pupils feel a greater sense of belonging to their school (Cleaver *et al.*, 2005) and local communities (Osler and Starkey, 2005) than with the nation. Finally, in a recent report Ofsted (2006:10) noted that in some schools citizenship education is ‘invisible in the curriculum’. Ofsted (2006:10) also found that ‘the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and

understanding' in Key Stage 3 and their origins and implications in Key Stage 4 are 'only rarely deconstructed to explore in any detail what this implies'. This absence was considered pivotal to understanding about Britain, 'Britishness' and the principles and procedures that underpin British democracy.

6. DEVELOPING BRITISH IDENTITIES THROUGH TEACHING THE HISTORY CURRICULUM

The History National Curriculum Orders (1999) specifically relate the learning of history with the development of pupils' identities and sense of place in society:

In studying History, pupils' consider how the past influences the present, what past societies were like, how these societies organised their politics and what beliefs and cultures influenced peoples' actions. History provides opportunities to promote cultural development through helping pupils recognise differences and similarities between cultures and within cultures over time...they see the diversity of human experience, and understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society (National Curriculum Orders, 1999).

This section explores the various issues concerning history teaching in relation to the development of British identities. In doing this we will explore:

- the importance of teaching history that recognises the significant contribution of minority ethnic groups to the development of British identities and British citizenship
- issues concerning English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish history teaching in relation to British identities.

History teaching and minority ethnic groups' contribution to the 'nation'

As discussed earlier in section 2, the representation of history in schools, museums and popular culture in relation to identity, particularly when presented as common 'heritage', can work to exclude as well as include (Corner and Harvey, 1991). The social dominance of particular ethnic or national groups in a nation-state can lead to the conflation of their interests and 'culture' with those of the nation-state as a whole, thus marginalising other ethnic and national groups. An ethnic group's 'history' can be part of this conflation. For example, whilst Asian and Black African and Caribbean people played a significant role in fighting both world wars, this is often not shown in contemporary representations (Fryer, 1984; Gilroy, 1993). Phillips and Phillips (1998) have written about their remembrance of this exclusion in relation to Caribbean and African soldiers in the decades after World War Two:

It comes as a shock now to note the complete absence of Black Caribbean or African participants in the plethora of British films about the Second World War. After all, the involvement of Black colonials was a fact that was part of our experience. . . all the surviving photographs of our own father as a young man show him in uniform. . . Our astonishment was, and still is, to do with the extent to which they had disappeared, had been expurgated from the story, as if they had never existed. (Phillips and Phillips, 1998:5)

As Corner and Harvey note, much of what is represented as heritage presents ‘narrow’ versions of national identity that ‘often have strong imperialist assumptions built into their ideas of ‘the Nation’, giving their rhetoric a White racial character which either ignores, or openly rejects, the nature of Britain as a multi-ethnic society’ (Corner and Harvey, 1991:51).

Such forms of history marginalise the history of non-European ethnic groups in two ways. Firstly, as reported by the QCA (2005c) and Visram (1990, 2002) the history of these groups’ involvement, achievements and contribution to British life for centuries is marginalised and ignored. Visram (1990) notes:

Traditionally, as far as British school history is concerned women, the working class and Black peoples of Britain had no place in it. In fact the likes of Lord Elton (an immigrant himself) have gone so far as to declare that ‘we need more English history, and not this non-existent history of ethnic minorities and women’. Omissions and attitudes like this deny the very important contributions made by Black peoples to British history, society and culture, and their very presence in Britain – a presence that is not of recent origin, but goes far back in history. (Visram, 1990:164-165)

Secondly, Visram (1990, 2002) and others (e.g. Commission on African and Asian Heritage, 2005; Parekh, 2000a) have argued that by teaching history predominantly within the boundaries of the ‘Nation’ and neglecting Britain’s links abroad – especially a full and critical account of the British Empire – the history taught in schools ignores the social histories of those whose ‘ethnic’ origins lie within the old boundaries of Empire:

Can British history be divorced from the history of British involvement in parts of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean? In what ways [can] links with these countries be added to British history and what contribution was made by these countries, directly or indirectly, to the growth of Britain as a nation – economically, socially, culturally and politically? (Visram, 1990:165)

Confining the teaching of Black history in schools to slavery, post-war immigration and/or to Black History Month (October) also serves to undervalue Black peoples’ contributions to contemporary British society (QCA, 2005c).

Activists, educators and academics, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, have increasingly challenged ‘mono-cultural’ representations of British history in order to challenge similar ‘mono-cultural’ and exclusionary notions of British national identity (see e.g. Baker Jr *et al.*, 1996; Wrenn, 2006). As Phillips and Phillips state in relation to Black African-Caribbeans:

In the last fifty years the minority to which we belonged had become an authentic strand of British society. If we were engaged in a struggle, it wasn’t about our ‘acceptance’ as individuals. Instead, it was about our status as citizens, and it seemed obvious that if our citizenship was to mean more than the paper on which

it was written, it would be necessary for the whole country to reassess not only its own identity, and its history, but also what it meant to be British (Phillips and Phillips, 1998:5).

This challenge centres on the field of education:

Our pupils need to learn about . . . the Black contribution to British history. Not because the ‘ethnic minorities’ want to learn about Black heroes and Black heroines and so gain self esteem, or because in a culturally diverse society we want to teach tolerance and respect for minority cultures . . . but because it is part of British history (Visram, 1990:170).

Lyndon (2006:2) suggests that Black British history (e.g. from the Elizabethan period onwards) can be integrated into the Key Stage 3 history curriculum schemes of work with ‘little disruption’ (see also Wrenn, 2006).

In 2003, the Runnymede Trust, an independent think-tank which focuses on social justice and ‘race’ equality, produced a book entitled *Complementing Teachers*, which aims to provide teachers with guidance on how to make the curriculum culturally diverse. In a section devoted to history teaching, the book notes how powerful history lessons can be in enabling pupils to explore their own roots and backgrounds, increase their social, political and economic understanding of the world, and crucially ‘help pupils to appreciate that society has always been diverse and complex, so deepening an appreciation of community in the present’ (Runnymede 2003:70). They emphasise, for example, learning about patterns of migration at local, national and international levels, to help foster an understanding of Britain in an international global context and learning that there will always be different interpretations of the past based on different viewpoints of the world, for example the different understandings and views of colonisation that would come from texts or other sources from colonisers or colonised peoples (2003:71).

Another initiative entitled the GARP (Global and Anti-Racist Perspectives) Project (2006) have produced materials designed to help teachers integrate such perspectives into their primary teaching throughout the curriculum as a way of raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils and to help pupils understand and challenge racism and discrimination (a National Curriculum commitment). The Project found that sometimes the QCA Units did not provide teachers with appropriate support to teach history that would be relevant to the identities of pupils from minority ethnic groups and provide all children with a wider understanding of how today’s multi-ethnic society came into being. For example, in a section on teaching about Victorian Britain, the QCA units focus on what it was like for children living in Victorian Britain and how life changed ‘in our locality’ in this age, but there is no reference to important aspects such as the British Empire, the issue of the abolition of the slave trade, or the contribution (or even existence) of Black and Asian people in Victorian times. As Visram and others have mentioned above, such absence can only contribute to a conception that British history is the history of ‘White’ ‘home nations’ (and usually English) people, and correspondingly

that British identity comprises only those of 'White' 'home nation' identities. Moreover, the GARP project stresses the importance of understanding Britain and British history in relation to other global events, and to help teachers in the delivery of a global historical perspective in the lessons they have developed a 'Global History Timeline' as part of their teaching materials. A global perspective allows pupils to learn and understand the achievements and cultures of peoples around the world, and avoid 'Eurocentric' teaching that implies modern Europe to be the most 'advanced' and valuable form of civilisation (Parekh, 2000a).

Parekh (2000a) and others have also noted the importance of applying such innovations to history teaching across the board, in all areas of the history curriculum, rather than compartmentalising such teaching as 'extras' to mainstream teaching:

Ideally, histories and experiences of minority communities should not be taught separately but integrated into the general history of the community. This ensures that their particular experiences and historical memories . . . find their proper place in the collective memory and self-understanding of the society as a whole (Parekh, 2000a:229-230).

There are also a range of projects and initiatives in the museum/heritage sector aimed at providing 'alternative' to mainstream, anti-racist and inclusionist representations of the past, which can be accessed by schools for visits (Delivering Shared Heritage, 2005; London Museums Agency, 2003;). These include a project by the National Archives entitled 'Moving Here', sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Using memorabilia and stories from 'everyday lives', it looks at how and why people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds have migrated to Britain over the last 200 years (<http://www.movinghere.org.uk/>; see Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005). The Commission on African and Asian heritage (2005) lobbies for greater acknowledgement in representations of Black and minority ethnic contributions to the development of Britain. Archives exist of minority ethnic historical materials such as the Black Cultural Archive (<http://www.bcaheritage.org.uk/flash/home.htm>) and the Runnymede Collection (<http://www.mdx.ac.uk/runnymede/>), and every October a wide range of initiatives under the umbrella of Black History Month provide and organise workshops, materials and information aimed especially for (but not only for) schools (<http://www.Black-history-month.co.uk/>). Other websites also provide materials on Black and minority ethnic British history, including Black History 4 Schools (<http://www.Blackhistory4schools.com/>). The Black Presence in Britain (<http://www.Blackpresence.co.uk/>), CASBAH (Caribbean Studies, Black and Asian History) (<http://www.casbah.ac.uk/>), and Connections: Hidden British Histories, focusing on Asian, Black and Jewish history and experiences in Britain (<http://www.connections-exhibition.org/>). A wide plethora of projects, some funded by Local Authorities and others established independently, focus on local or regional Black and minority ethnic history (<http://www.realhistories.org.uk>), and some sites focus specifically on minority ethnic history in one or more 'home nations', for example the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre (<http://www.sjac.org.uk/>).

‘Home Nation’ identities and ‘Britishness’ in the teaching of history

As already discussed in section 3, English people often mistakenly conflate their own identity with that of the UK as a whole, reflecting the unequal power relation between England and the other ‘home nations’. This can sometimes also be reflected in the teaching of history. A number of studies have looked at ‘anglocentric’ history teaching in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in relation to the nation’s Imperial role, where the roles and ‘achievement’ of Scottish and Welsh people were marginalised (Ahier, 1988; Mangan, 1988; Phillips, 1999). Historians such as Davies (2000) argue that such conflation and marginalisation can also be seen in many representations of history and mainstream history teaching today – noting in particular the way that many mainstream accounts describe Britain as ‘an island’, thus ignoring Northern Ireland (Davies, 2000).

Finlay (2001) argues that moves towards devolution in Scotland and Wales have provided a springboard for a resurgence in popular interest in Scottish and Welsh ‘national’ history. This included a campaign for specifically Scottish national history to be taught in Scottish schools – although the authors of the report were keen to stress the possible negative exclusionary implications of such teaching if it was overtly ‘nationalistic’ (Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum, 1998). Debates about history teaching and the representation of the past in relation to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are inextricably linked with contentious contemporary political debates over the merits of devolution and full independence (Finlay, 2001). For example, a fierce outcry took place when the National Museum of Scotland said that they could not represent William Wallace in the museum as they held no material artefacts relating to him. It was subsequently found that the museum owned the only extant letter known to have been written by William Wallace, which was at present housed in a section on the Baltic trade. This led Scottish nationalists to claim that political pressures had led to the museum deciding against a fuller representation of history relating to William Wallace as they did not want to promote the concept of Scottish independence (Finlay, 2001). The historian John Tosh stated in 1984 that ‘history is a political battleground’ and the same is true of historical teaching and representations of the past today (Tosh, 1984:8). The challenge for those aiming to create a fully inclusionary history curriculum in the UK is one that can bring together a full, inclusive history of the ‘home nations’ that is not unduly anglocentric, and also remains inclusionary of minority ethnic groups residing in each of the ‘home nations’.

In Northern Ireland, the ‘battle’ of competing perspectives is such that a history of the region is actually not taught at primary level. In a comparison of primary history teaching in the United States and Northern Ireland, Barton (2001) notes that whilst the history curriculum in the USA focuses on the development of national history in a chronological ‘story’ right up to the present day, in Northern Ireland (and indeed in the rest of the UK) children learn about a variety of different periods of history worldwide, from daily life in Ancient Egypt to daily life in the Victorian era, from the Vikings to (at least in Northern Ireland) life during the Irish famine (Barton, 2001). National history is not studied in depth until secondary school. At primary level, Barton notes:

Students in the United States are exposed continually to experiences, in school and out, that reinforce their identification with the history and development of the United States...In Northern Ireland...the story of the region's and the nation's past are almost completely omitted (for both political and pedagogical reasons) from the primary curriculum and from most other public forums where young children learn about history. (Barton, 2001:1)

Barton notes however, that many of the wide range of topics that the children in Northern Ireland cover do make links to the experiences of people in Ireland, especially in the North – they just do not follow a single chronological path to the present as in the case of the USA. Moreover, history teaching in Northern Ireland can only be understood in the context of competing Unionist and Nationalist perspectives on history and national identity:

Because the two communities have such diametrically opposed interpretations of the past 400 years ...neither narrative can become the focus of the primary school curriculum or public forums such as historic sites and museums. Telling any story of Northern Ireland's past, even one that attempts to include both Nationalist and Unionist histories, would lead to condemnation by one community or the other, and few institutions would be willing to engage in this kind of controversy. (Barton, 2001:3)

Barton argues however that the absence of a direct teaching of history in relation to the construction of regional or national identity can have significant benefits. In not concentrating on a single narrative account of the history of one country up to the present day, children in Northern Ireland and also the rest of the UK are more likely to see history as a way of understanding people with different ways of life, value social diversity, and develop an understanding of their identity within a global context (Barton, 2001). In this way Barton echoes the views of others referred to in this section, that rather than teaching an insular national history that may well present a mono-ethnic, exclusionary concept of national identity, a multi-faceted, multi-ethnic, and fully multi-national history of Britain, set in relation to the context of the rest of the world, is the best way to promote a multi-ethnic, inclusive concept of 'national' identity.

Section Summary

The history of the dominant ethnic group in a nation can often be conflated with the history of the nation as a whole – leading to marginalisation and exclusion. This can be seen for example in the marginalisation of the role of African-Caribbean and Asian people in the two World Wars. Such conflation means that the history of these groups' involvement and contribution to British life for centuries is marginalised and ignored. Activists, educators and academics, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, have increasingly challenged 'mono-cultural' representations of British history in order to challenge similar 'mono-cultural' and exclusionary notions of British national identity. This has included a wealth of material and information to be used in schools.

History teaching in the 'home nations' can also be anglocentric, reflecting the cultural dominance of the English in the UK. Moves towards devolution have heightened interest in 'home nation' history to counterbalance anglocentrism, although some warn against the production of overtly nationalistic 'exclusionary' forms of such national history. In Northern Ireland, representations of the past are particularly sensitive due to competing Nationalist and Unionist perspectives.

A multi-faceted, multi-ethnic, and fully multi-national history of Britain, set in relation to the context of the rest of the world, is the best way to promote a multi-ethnic, inclusive concept of 'national' identity.

7. EDUCATING FOR CITIZENSHIP THROUGH TEACHING MATHEMATICS

The draft specification EdExcel GCSE in mathematics (linear/modular) submitted to the QCA in January 2006 set out its vision for ‘education for citizenship’. It states that:

The GCSE specification for mathematics gives candidates the opportunity to develop their skills of enquiry and communication in relation to citizenship. ... They will have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of citizenship. In particular through their work in handling data (A04) candidates may have the opportunity to explore the use of statistical information in the media and its role in providing information and affecting opinion. ... Other opportunities for developing ideas of citizenship will present themselves depending on contexts in which they explore and develop their mathematical knowledge skills and understanding. (www.qca.org.uk)

Povey (2003) has explored how citizenship education (through the National Curriculum) and its emphasis on social cohesion can be exploited to support a more democratic mathematics and mathematics education. In doing this, she questions how the discourse of citizenship can provide a space in which to work for social justice and progressive social change. She is concerned that because of the contested nature of citizenship, citizenship education can serve to ‘maintain the culturally dominant, keeping some citizens marginalised or not recognising their citizenship’ (2003:54), by requiring conformity to a single cultural form. In addressing such, she argues that mathematics teachers will need to question the framework (e.g. Eurocentric or multicultural) from which they are operating.

Traditionally, mathematics is viewed as impersonal, objective and external, denying the validity of individual knowledge (Schuell, 1992). It is argued that a democratic mathematics curriculum encourages students to share their ideas and experiences and where diversity, difference and individuality, and other ways of knowing are respected. To participate in democratic citizenship students, would need to have sufficient mathematical literacy to understand the mathematical models being presented, to be aware of the preconditions of the modelling process that become hidden when mathematics gives it a neutral tone.

A significant barrier to the delivery of citizenship education within mathematics is the tight structure of the curriculum and assessment that operates within the subject. This puts pressure on both learners and teachers with, for example, many pupils encouraged to do their GCSE a year early, and leads to disaffection (Boaler, 1997; Nardi and Steward, 2003). Related to this is the way that the assessment and pedagogic practices in mathematics are often seen to require ‘ability’ grouping. Research has repeatedly showed that such setting has the effect of ‘rationing’ access to mathematics by ethnicity, as well as by socio-economic background (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; William and Bartholomew, 2004).

Section Summary

The Mathematics curriculum is expected to provide opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship. Traditionally mathematics is viewed as impersonal and external, denying the validity of individual knowledge. However, a democratic mathematics curriculum (as espoused by researchers such as Povey, 2003) encourages students to share their ideas and experiences and where diversity, difference and individuality, and other ways of knowing are respected.

8. METHODOLOGY: CASE STUDIES

In part one of this report we explored the literature in relation to diversity, British identities and citizenship education, part two turns to discussing the findings from the case study research. This particular section provides an overview of the case study schools and the methods used in conducting the case study research. The overall findings are discussed in sections 9 and 10.

Case study research

There are six case study schools covering both predominantly White and multiethnic environments (see Table 1). The intention was to obtain detailed information about the type of diversity and citizenship education provision delivered in these schools. As outlined in the introduction, the literature review and the school case studies sought to illuminate:

- how diversity is promoted across the curriculum in primary and secondary schools;
- how citizenship education is addressed across schools
- school perceptions of British identities, shared British values and whether/how to incorporate “Modern British Cultural and Social History” as a potential fourth pillar of the secondary citizenship programme.

Table1: Case study schools

School	Size	Location	FSM	Ethnic Diversity
A - secondary	Large	South West	2.5%	99% White
B - secondary	Medium	Inner London	19.6%	40% White British; 10% Caribbean; 10% Turkish; 7-8% Bangladeshi; 4-5% Indian & Pakistani; 2-3% Nigerian; 1% other African countries & other smaller groups
C - secondary	Medium	West Midlands	21%	32% White; 30% Indian; 25% Pakistani; 10% AC and smaller nos. of other ethnicities including Chinese & Korean
D - primary	Small	East Midlands	35%	1/3 White British; Asian; AC
E - primary	Medium	North East	11.5%	98% White; 2% Asian
F - primary	Large	Outer London	12.7%	70% White British; 11.5% mixed (Asian & White, Black African & White, Black Caribbean & White, any other mixed); 5.5% Asian; 3% White European; 3% Turkish; & other smaller groups including refugee groups

Selection of schools

The six case study schools (three primaries and three secondaries) were selected according to size, location and ethnic composition. We aimed to include three predominantly White schools and three multiethnic schools, which were ethnically and geographically diverse (e.g. rural/urban). It was our intention to choose one secondary school in a mainly White area and two in more ethnically diverse areas, and two primary schools from two very ethnically diverse areas in different locations, and one where there was a medium representation of ethnic diversity.

Of the three secondary schools, two were single sex girls' schools. The inclusion of two girls' schools impacted on our ability to have mixed gendered focus groups across all the schools (see focus groups).

Data collection

Two days were spent in each of the case study schools towards the end of September and mid October. This allowed for teacher interviews, focus groups and a small number of classroom observations to be conducted.

Teacher interviews

Each case study consisted of an in-depth semi-structured interview with the headteacher and the person responsible for PSHE/citizenship education. In the secondary schools we interviewed a third teacher who usually had responsibility for history or the humanities curriculum. In one secondary school a science teacher was also interviewed. The intention was to ascertain if science was a subject area where a diverse curriculum could be applied. A total of 15 teachers (including the six headteachers) were interviewed. The list of teachers interviewed is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Teacher interviews

School	Role and responsibilities
A	Headteacher, Head of PSHE, Science teacher
B	Headteacher, Deputy (Pastoral/PSHE), Director of Humanities
C	Deputy & Headteacher, Lead Professional in Citizenship, PSHE and Careers, Lead Professional in History (with some PSHE teaching)
D	Headteacher, Senior Teacher/EMA/PSHE Co-ordinator
E	Headteacher, Senior Curriculum Leader (PSHE)
F	Headteacher, PSHE Co-ordinator
Total	15

Focus groups

Schools selected individuals they considered articulate and able to contribute to the discussions. Across the six schools, 95 pupils participated in the discussion groups from Key Stages 2, 3 and 4. The precise details are given in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Focus groups – Key Stages 3-4

School	Gender/Year group	Ethnicity
A	Boys – Year 10-11	6 White British
	Girls – Year 9	6 White British
B	Girls – Years 7-8	2 Turkish, 3 Asian, 2 African-Caribbean, 2 White British
	Girls – Year 10	1 Turkish, 1 White European, 3 Asian, 1 African, 2 White British, 1 African-Caribbean
C	Girls – Years 7-9	3 White British, 3 Asian, 2 African-Caribbean, 1 Chinese
	Girls – Years 10-11	2 White British, 1 White European, 3 African-Caribbean, 3 Asian
Total	48	

Table 4: Focus groups - Key Stage 2

School	Gender/Year group	Ethnicity
D	Boys - Years 3-6	2 Asian, 2 White British, 1 African, 2 African-Caribbean
	Girls - Years 4-6	3 White British, 2 Mixed heritage (African-Caribbean & Irish; African-Caribbean & White English), 2 Asian, 1 African-Caribbean
E	Boys – Year 6	8 White British
	Girls – Year 6	8 White British
F	Boys – Year 5	6 White British, 1 African, 1 Philippino
	Girls – Year 5	5 White British, 1 African, 1 White European, 1 White Other
Total	47	

Classroom observations

The intention was to conduct between two and four classroom observations in each of the case study schools. Classroom observations were conducted in five of the six schools. These included observations of geography, literacy, music, numeracy, citizenship, history and science lessons, and a foundation class (see Table 5).

As well as the topics covered, the observation schedules sought to record pupil interaction and the ways in which identities (individual and British) and citizenship values were promoted in the classroom, and how pupils' responded to diversity and citizenship issues.

Table 5: Classroom observations

School	Lesson
A	History (Year 8), Citizenship (Year 7)
C	Science (Year 7), Geography (Year 7), Citizenship (Year 10)
D	Literacy (Year 5), Numeracy (Year 5), Geography (Year 3), Music (Year 1), Foundation stage
E	Numeracy (Year 6), Literacy (Year 5)
F	Literacy (Years 2, 3, 4 & 6)
Total	

Other observations

In addition to the classroom observations, school assemblies in schools A, D and E were observed. A further formal observation included a lunchtime sixth form debate on ‘integration vs. multiculturalism’ in school C. This involved two groups of five and six respectively. The ethnic composition was seven Asian and four White British students; one of whom was male).

General school observations were undertaken during breaks and lunchtimes.

Other data collection

Policies, schemes of work and other curriculum strategies pertaining to diversity and citizenship in the curriculum were collected from five of the six case study schools.

Data analysis

All of the data was anonymised. The interview and focus group data was analysed using the NVivo qualitative data software package. This made it easier to identify the categories and terms used by the respondents and enabled emerging patterns and themes to be coded, and for the coded data to be rigorously analysed (Miles and Huberman, 2002; Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

Ethical issues

As the literature review shows, race, ethnicity and national identity are contested and sensitive issues for individuals and organisations. Research such as ours must engage with these contestations and sensitivities within its methodology. In most cases we sent two researchers to each school (in one case, due to logistics, this was not possible). This allowed for the integration of different perspectives within the analysis. In all but one case, one of the researchers was White and one Black, so that the perspectives were of those in a structurally different position with respect to ‘race’. In some cases, this produced interesting data. For example, at one school a deputy headteacher being interviewed by one Black and one White researcher made significantly more eye contact with the White researcher, despite the fact that the Black researcher was the one with whom previous contact had been made and the one asking most of the questions.

Due to the timetable for this research, the fieldwork was carried out during Black History Month. Thus the practice we saw is unlikely to be representative of what goes on during the remainder of the year. Similarly, the schools were self-selecting and they chose which pupils we had access to, and, to some extent, which teachers. This is worth bearing in mind as you read the case study analysis.

9. CASE STUDY FINDINGS: PROMOTING DIVERSITY THROUGH THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

This section aims to provide an overview of how the case study schools approached diversity and attempted to deliver a diverse curriculum. It explores some of the challenges and constraints identified by schools in promoting diversity. Also explored are pupils' attitudes towards and experiences of diversity. Attention is drawn to examples of curriculum diversity.

Diversity

School diversity

As stated earlier three of the case study schools had a multiethnic intake and three had a predominantly White pupil composition. One of the schools that we designated 'White' was in the early stages of becoming a multiethnic school:

Originally it was very much a White community; a very local community. Parents of children came to the school themselves, so we've had parents and grandparents who've been here, so it's a very stable community – or it was until about 5 years ago. Last year was probably the last of the aspirational parents who fought to get into the fee paying and the prep schools around here. Now we have a very changing population, so we have more Turkish speakers than we've ever had before. Last year there were more Farsi speakers but they've moved on ... We're still a more stable community but now there are now a range of faiths coming in and a range of languages. (Primary Headteacher – School F)

The headteacher of this school welcomed the changing pupil population as it allowed the school to share in this 'new' diversity, which it was argued had not happened before. The school's involvement in this project was also viewed as a 'catalyst for change', the intention being to value pupils and their diversity more.

Understanding of diversity

I understand diversity to mean in terms of culture, language, experience, your social class, culture in the widest sense and being prepared to accept and value the contributions that people from all of those different backgrounds have made. I just don't regard it as an issue to do with race. (PSHE Co-ordinator – School D)

Respondents brought different understandings of 'diversity' to their own perceptions of the diversity that they encountered in schools. Most of the school staff emphasised culture, ethnicity and language when talking about diversity, exceptions to this included a science teacher who saw diversity in purely biological terms (e.g. intelligence, scientific evolution, pathogenic diseases) and a PSHE teacher who equated diversity with 'children that you have to make special provision for'.

Teacher experience of diversity

Five of the six headteachers had acquired a wealth of experience teaching in multiethnic contexts. For example, the headteacher of an all White secondary school in the South West had spent a number of years teaching and managing ethnically diverse schools in London. However, for some staff their experience of diversity was derived from their initial teacher training and their current school.

In terms of their particular school contexts all of the schools were at different stages in delivering a diverse curriculum. The primary school located in the East Midlands and the inner London secondary school had by far the most experience and the school in outer London the least. The secondary school in the West Midlands had been addressing practice for a while, whereas the secondary school in the South West had begun to address their practice more recently.

School approach to diversity

The case study schools with the most ethnically diverse populations had adopted a multidimensional approach to diversity. Diversity was explored in relation to assessing individual pupil attainment, examination results, setting individual pupil targets, understanding individual learning styles and how different ethnic groups engage in lessons, and by developing strategies that aid personalised learning and help staff to improve their practice. By exploring and reviewing diversity data at a group and individual pupil level these schools were able to develop a school curriculum that focuses on diversity and attempts to meet the needs of individual pupils, and prepare them for living in Britain in the twenty-first century.

None of the ethnically diverse schools had sought to develop specific policies on diversity in the curriculum as it was intimated that diversity was ‘second nature’ to them, and in one primary school, ‘part of the fabric of what teachers do’ (Headteacher, school D). In this school, teachers were expected to show in their planning, teaching methods and the resources used where the opportunities are for educating about diversity. An example was given of the type of approach teachers were expected to adopt in their practice:

I would try to draw on children’s own experience and things they are familiar with and make it relevant both to the individual child and the other children around them. I would draw on their own cultural backgrounds to use as examples in teaching, and then I would draw on the cultural backgrounds that aren’t represented in school because I think that is equally important because you can’t possibly have everybody represented in one school, so it’s important to draw on other things that they don’t share. (Primary PSHE Co-ordinator – School D)

Teachers in school D were further encouraged to focus on ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity, promote ‘mutual trust and respect’ and challenge ‘bias, prejudice and discrimination’ by race equality targets contained within each curriculum policy area.

All of the schools aimed to value children’s diversity as part of the government policy initiative ‘*Every Child Matters*’ however, having a diverse and culturally relevant curriculum seemed a higher priority for the multiethnic schools. Headteachers in these schools saw themselves playing a key role in this, including ensuring that teachers are trained and they have access to appropriate resources. For the predominantly White secondary case study school implementing a culturally diverse curriculum was a goal they were working towards, with ‘diversity’ designated a ‘big issue’ in their humanities schemes of work. This was considered salient because ‘the world is a bit of patchwork quilt and it’s important to learn about tolerance and acceptance’ (Head of PSHE, School A) at a local and global level.

Across the case study schools assemblies were used to deliver and reinforce positive diversity messages. One such example was of a primary school that had devised a yearly assembly programme for celebrating diversity and eliciting an understanding of why the school considered diversity important (see following).

<i>Exploring diversity through school assemblies – School D</i>		
Week beginning	Monday	Thursday
11 September	Ethiopian New Years Day (11/9 – Rastafarianism)	Jesse Owens (B. 12/9/1913)
18 September		Autumn Equinox (21/9)
25 September	Ramadan (25/9 – 23/10)	Ghandhi (b. 2/10/1869)
02 October	Black History Month – 100 Black Britons	Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur
09 October	Sukkot (7-15 October)	Paul Bogle (11/10)
16 October	World Food Day (16/10)	Festivals: Diwali (21/10), (Sikh/Hindu) Eid ul Fitr (24/10) (Muslim)
30 October	Samhain/All Saints Day/All Souls Day (31/10)	Crowning of Haile Selassie (2/11)
06 November	Guru Nanak’s birthday (5/11)	Benjamin Banneker (b. 9/11/1731)
13 November	Remembrance Day/Armistice – NB: contributions of Black & Asian servicemen & women	Nehru (b. 14/11/1889); International Day for Tolerance
20 November	Universal Children’s Day (20/11 – UNICEF)	Evolution Day – Anniversary of publication of “Origin of the Species” – Darwin
27 November	Freddie Mercury (Farookh Bulsara – d. 24/11/1991)	St. Andrew’s Day (30/11) – UK Saints and flags which make up the Union Flag
04 December	Advent (3/12) – Nativity Story	Christmas Traditions around the world
11 December	Human Rights Day (10/12)	Chico Mendes (b. 15/12/1944)
18 December	Slavery Abolished USA (18/12/1865), Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Olaudah Equiano	

National Curriculum

One primary school had studied the National Curriculum to ‘look for every opportunity’ that could be found ‘to put an element of diversity into each unit of work right across the curriculum’ (Headteacher, school D). Why? Because diversity was considered a ‘very positive thing’ and was viewed as salient as:

So much of the conflict in society is to do with a lack of understanding and a lack of appreciation of the contribution that different people have made over the years to society in general. (Primary Headteacher – School D)

The headteacher of school B also saw a concentration on diversity as a way of closing the diversity/unity divide.

Most teachers spoke of being encouraged to encompass diversity in their planning and teaching. For the primary headteacher referred to above there was ‘no excuse’ for teachers not to address issues of diversity in their teaching. At the time of the case study visits the school was in the process of reviewing all its schemes of work, so as to incorporate further elements of diversity from the GARP project (Integrating Global and Antiracist Perspectives within the Primary Curriculum – see sections 1 and 6 for further details). An example of which is given below.

School D		
Scheme of work: Science Strand – All About Me (Foundation stage)		
Session	Learning Objectives	Activities/Content
4	To know that humans have 5 senses. To explore using these senses. To make observations and records.	Discuss and name the 5 senses. Label body parts associated with each sense. Carry out taste and smell experiments, identifying foods by their smell/taste alone. *GARP – for smell experiment, include spices and seasonings from different countries. All About Me GARP body parts game is available in other languages including Urdu.

*GARP – Integrating Global and Antiracist Perspectives within the Primary Curriculum

Moreover, school D had previously been instrumental in developing an ‘Anti-racist Maths Manual’ for local primary schools.

Other case study schools also gave examples of how ‘diversity’ had been written into their schemes of work.

The multiethnic schools were more likely to have exploited flexibility in the National Curriculum to enable them to deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of the school and promote an understanding of multicultural Britain:

I think it's a recognition that the pupils come from diverse backgrounds, whether they are defined by ethnicity, social class, by religion, by any of the various groupings that we use and all have equal value as far as we recognise them in the curriculum, and I think the National Curriculum allows you to do that. It's a matter of looking at the programmes of study and using them flexibly to fit the situation of the school and the needs of the pupils and I think with a little bit of imagination and a little bit of knowledge and research then our staff have certainly found it possible to do that. (Deputy Head – School C)

But history specialists felt constrained as to how far they could make the history curriculum diverse owing to the prescriptive elements that have to be covered:

We have to cover certain things which means sometimes you might have to rein yourself in, and I think, 'I can't go down that road and I've got to get on with this particular topic'. (Secondary History teacher – School C)

The headteacher of school D called for greater flexibility in the history curriculum to make it less Eurocentric and more suitable to what each school is trying to do. Given the opportunity, this headteacher proposed doing more about the slave trade when the Tudors are covered.

Curriculum diversity

Most of the case study schools considered delivering a diverse curriculum essential particularly in relation to raising pupils' awareness of global and local diversity. Enabling pupils to have a wider understanding of ethnic and cultural diversity was viewed as important by school staff, especially where pupils live in ethnically segregated communities outside school. In view of this, school D had devised a six week course on 'race' and cultural awareness for pupils in Year 5.

The multiethnic schools thought themselves good at doing diversity:

I think we're quite good at putting diversity into our lessons because every group of girls we have is very diverse, and I think no matter what you're teaching, I also teach RE and history... from a historical point of view, we're all diverse even White British people will have different backgrounds because there is Anglo Saxon, Dukes, Romans, Normans, Flemish, the whole of British history is not just one solid mass, so we quite often challenge it. (Head of PSHE – School C)

The curriculum areas that seemed to offer the most opportunities for delivering a diverse curriculum included subjects such as history (e.g. at primary level - the Egyptians (QCA unit 10) and the Greeks (QCA units 14 and 15) in Year 5 and the Aztecs in Year 6 - and at secondary - Nazi Germany, colonialism and slavery) geography (local, regional, national, global), religious education, English/literacy, art and music.

Example of exploring diversity through history

In history we've just introduced a new unit in Year 7 where we talk about immigration... so we look at Irish, Asian and Black immigration to England. That's a nice introduction to history for the Year 7s as they come into school because straight away it's exposing them to the history of Britain. ... In Year 8 we do a non-British study which is Moghul India. As we have such a big group of Asian girls at the school a lot of them can relate to talk about the history of India. A lot of them talk about their families that come from there and that gets them involved. In Year 9 when we do the First World War we talk about how soldiers from the Empire came to fight together. A big misconception is that people fighting in the war were British. Pupils don't think about people from India and the Caribbean coming to fight. We try to give the idea that the British army was a diverse force. In Year 10 we do American history so we talk about [1920s] immigration to America from Europe, we talk about racism, tensions, Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights movement. In Year 11 we do a unit on Elvis Presley and talk about his mix of Black and White music and how it was breaking down racial barriers. (Head of History – School C)

A mainly White secondary school also found history a useful avenue for promoting an understanding of diversity:

In humanities we start off doing a project on 1066, then move onto the Crusades, and culminate with the [name of area] project. In year 9 history we teach the Black history of America. In year 10 we look at national, regional, religious and ethnic identities, and Travellers rights. (Senior Curriculum Leader – School A)

Literacy afforded opportunities for example of exploring identity issues such as the use of different accents and dialects (e.g. Geordie, Yorkshire) by different groups in society.

Example of exploring diversity through literacy

In Year 5 in the literacy hour one of the units is short stories and novels by popular children's authors. We cover three authors in a three-week block and we would make sure that two of those authors were not White British. We would use somebody like Mallory Blackman as an example of a Black British author and when we do poetry we frequently use poems by Benjamin Zephaniah which the children absolutely adore. We would mention people like Michael Rosen and what his background is and so on. You don't have to make a big deal of it you bring them to life by saying: 'this is a real person and this is their background'. (PHSE Co-ordinator – School D)

PSHE/citizenship education was also viewed as offering possibilities for exploring and valuing diversity issues. For example, schools A and B looked at the making of the Union Jack and what it means.

Through religious education pupils are enabled to develop an understanding of world religions (e.g. Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity and Sikhism). School D had taken this a stage further and included Rastafarianism and Humanism when looking at different religions. Both had been added to the curriculum as they have pupils with Rastafarian backgrounds and some pupils were known not to have a professed religion, and so having humanism as an area of study helped to motivate and sustain their interest.

Some schools seemed to explore diversity through themed days/months (e.g. Black History Month, languages day, international days, diversity/multi-culture day, global youth day). School A for example used its themed days to emphasise global diversity and elicit an understanding of racism. During our visit to school C Black History Month was brought together with different curriculum areas (e.g. Year 7 geography and Year 7 science). The primary headteacher of school D argued that he did not support Black History Month as doing so could lead to Black history being perceived as a ‘bolt-on’ or ‘tokenistic measure’, and preferred instead to integrate Black history throughout the whole curriculum. Nonetheless, our discussions with pupils at school C during their library search on Black scientists and inventors, would seem to indicate that some pupils (whether perceived as ‘bolt-on’ or not) would relish more opportunities to explore Black people in their lessons.

It should be noted that the headteacher of a mainly White primary school in the North East was concerned by the study’s focus on curriculum diversity. This is despite the fact that through its Race Equality policy the school aimed to prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society, and to ‘exploit opportunities to celebrate the richness of diversity of different cultures and the achievements of individuals’. While the schemes of work pertaining to history and religious education provide opportunities to support these aims, there seemed to be a mismatch between these stated policy objectives and the headteacher’s perception of the curriculum that was delivered in school. When asked if her school curriculum was diverse she gave the following response:

I would hesitate to make a judgement. I think it could be more diverse and I think we’re very aware of the fact that we have a very low percentage of children from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds so I think it probably could be, but it’s very difficult to get the balance right between forcing something and actually it being part of what we’ve already planned for the children so possibly it could be but we’re very wary of it becoming a very contrived situation rather than an integral part of the children’s learning, so I hesitate to make a judgement on that. (Primary Headteacher - School E)

However, it was evident from another mainly White school’s involvement in this study that it is possible for such schools to deliver a diverse curriculum without giving the impression of the curriculum being ‘contrived’. For example, school A which was in the initial stages of promoting diversity had adopted the strategy of presenting positive images of different communities through its assemblies (e.g. Walter Tull, a Black footballer who died in World War One; another assembly looked at famous people suffering from Parkinson’s disease, e.g. Mohammed Ali). It had also begun to develop global links with South Africa, China, and Europe through its international business and languages faculty. The school had sought to focus Key Stage 3 pupils’ minds on Islamophobia, the influence of the media and ways of confronting prejudice and stereotype through its theatre links. Religious education had also been used to develop community links through for example visits to a local Buddhist temple, and to further understanding of ‘community’ (locally and nationally).

Despite not implementing a diverse curriculum, a primary headteacher in outer London suggested that ‘diversity’ underpins everything the school is trying to achieve:

We aim to enable pupils to make sense of the world in which they live, and to respect its diversity, people and places. (Primary Headteacher – School F)

It was suggested that ‘Every Child Matters’ offered the school a way of moving forward in terms of addressing staff attitudes to diversity and looking at what the school offers so as to ensure that every child matters, and pupils feel more confident to use ‘home’ languages in school. There was an expectation that this initiative would help the headteacher to feed diversity in:

Slowly but surely so that you’ve then got more people who are talking to other individuals who are then ready to take it on board ... so it infiltrates the kinds of different feelings and constantly challenges attitudes because attitudes are quite strong here. (Primary Headteacher – School F)

Pupils’ attitudes to and experience of curriculum diversity

Pupils in the multiethnic schools were more likely to learn about diverse cultures/groups at a global level however, most wanted to learn more about British people because as one pupil said: ‘we don’t learn about different people in Britain we just learn about people with different cultures’. Although most alluded to learning more about English (e.g. the Tudors, the Victorians) rather than British history, some White British pupils felt their history was ignored:

I do feel sometimes that there’s no White history. There’s either Black History Month or as I said they do Muslims and there’s Sikhs, we learn about that, but we don’t learn about White people, so we do feel a bit left out as well. (White girl, Year 10, School B)

Pupils reported looking at different religions. Several (in multiethnic schools) were however, exasperated by the repetitiveness of covering Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Christianity - ‘we do it every year more or less the same stuff’. This was in contrast to some pupils in mainly White schools who valued the opportunity religious education and other curriculum areas provided in raising their awareness of diverse cultures:

I think it’s interesting to do it from other countries because it raises awareness of what is actually happening around the world and it’s good to know about that and schools should do more about other parts of the world to help pupils understand more about different cultures and prepare them so they won’t make any mistakes about someone’s religion. (White boy, Years 10-11, School A)

Some minority ethnic pupils felt they did not experience some of the things they were being taught about ‘their’ religion in the way teachers explored the various issues:

When you see girls walking down the corridor you’re not 100% sure, you kind of think all Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus have to abide by the rules, but when you talk to your friends

about it, they don't completely follow it... They [teachers] only say what they should do not what they actually do. (White girl, Year 10, School B)

These pupils preferred to have religious education taught by teachers from mixed heritage backgrounds:

Because they've got two separate sides, they are not always stuck to the one thing, they know how it feels to have two different cultures or religions, so they mix and think about other people's religions. (Asian girl, Years 7-8, School B)

Teacher articulations and our classroom observations suggest that many pupils enjoy exploring diversity through the curriculum. The following excerpts give an indication of some pupils' positive embrace of diversity:

This school is really mixed and there are sort of more Black, half Black and half White people than there are White people and that's really good because it shows we can all get on. (White girl, Years 7-9, School C).

People say to me: 'Why do you wear a scarf?' I feel proud to tell them why I wear it because it's part of my identity. (Asian girl, Years 7-9, School C)

It makes it easier to express yourself, if everyone was the same you'd think there is no point telling anybody anything because we would be the same, there is no point, everybody would know. (Black girl, Years 7-9, School C)

Although some pupils enjoyed a diverse curriculum there was evidence to suggest that several pupils in the multiethnic schools were 'bored' with doing diversity; especially where the topics were viewed as 'repetitive', 'uninteresting' and 'rushed'. School staff argued that pupils sometimes became bored hearing the same message 'we're all different' all the time; preferring teachers to 'move on':

We must be thinking about diversity all the time [but] it does sort of bore the kids, they are like: 'yes, but we are diverse, we've all been to primary school together, we don't have issues of segregation or integration' and all those sorts of things. 'She's my mate and yes she's got a different background and that's fab but can we not just get on' ... I think the girls sometimes feel like that. 'It's political correctness again Miss', we do get that from the older girls ... sometimes it does get down to that stage of feeling a bit repetitive. (Head of Citizenship/PHSE – School C)

Issues arising out of 'doing' diversity

Schools with more ethnically diverse intakes spoke of the need to influence and develop pupils' understanding of diversity in 'small chunks' 'so that it is not forgotten'. However, it was argued that 'forcing' pupils' to think about diversity 'doesn't always make them think about it' especially during Black History Month when diversity is 'hammered in every single subject' and then is ignored for the rest of the year.

Some teachers seemed to find it difficult to explore diversity issues and/or ask pupils from particular ethnic groups questions about their background because of their own lack of confidence in their own knowledge of different ethnic/cultural groups:

If you look at the teaching staff it's predominantly White and I think that if you haven't got experience of different cultures yourself, then it can be quite uncomfortable trying to teach it. 'Am I offending anybody because of my own ignorance?' – I think some staff feel that. (Head of Citizenship/PSHE – School C)

Some of the teacher respondents alluded to a tension between diversity and unity and eliciting shared understanding amongst pupils. At one secondary school, while seemingly not wishing to stereotype Pakistani and Indian girls, but nevertheless doing so, teachers felt that such pupils, as a consequence of their 'quietness' 'get pushed to the back in terms of celebrating their culture and diversity'. It was also felt that pupils who were less confident in debating issues (namely Pakistani and Indian girls) were more likely to 'go through the motions' and not necessarily engage with the issues. Notwithstanding, perhaps a more valid reason for some pupils not engaging in such discussions is the fact that they do not always want to share their life experiences with other pupils:

I don't want everyone to know the things that have gone wrong in my life because some things have. (Chinese girl, Years 7-9, School C)

Moreover, it is evident that if the classroom context is right pupils are more likely to share personal stories. For example, in one of our classroom observations in School C some Pakistani Muslim girls were observed engaging in discussions, and seemed willing to share personal stories/experiences as demonstrated by their written texts which we witnessed in a PSHE lesson about 'drugs and pressure groups'.

Challenges to delivering a diverse curriculum

A number of challenges were identified to delivering a diverse curriculum. A major concern for both White and multiethnic schools is the fact that pupil experience of diversity can be 'very narrow'. However, while multiethnic schools seemed more confident in addressing such narrowness, heads of mainly White schools (particularly primary) were wary of presenting diversity issues in a 'forced' way and covering activities that 'did not mean something to the children in the context of what they're already learning at school'. A further concern related to not having the expertise or experience to capitalise on opportunities that arise in the classroom and/or 'pick up on a variety of cultures without it being [perceived as] tokenistic'. These headteachers also worried how they would challenge pupils who were 'not accepting of diversity' and racist parents who encouraged similar values in their children.

Another key challenge to delivering a diverse curriculum related to pupils getting a stronger input on diversity from some teachers:

There are some staff who take it on board very strongly and are really enthusiastic about it and so girls who are having these teachers are probably getting a stronger input than

others. Even with the curriculum and schemes of work it's not always possible to dictate every element of the experience that they get. (Deputy Headteacher – School C)

Some teachers worried at how to reflect the diversity of individual schools; particularly where there is a huge level of diversity (e.g. 60 languages spoken) and a lack of books and resources that pertain to the particular ethnic make-up of the pupil population found in their respective schools. These teachers required books and other resources that 'reflect society today' and not just White society.

School interviewees were uncertain as to how diversity issues could be explored through mathematics and science. A secondary science teacher at school A, argued that his teaching does not address issues of diversity as 'people are just people', and science itself is a 'formal' and 'impersonal' subject. One of the difficulties these schools faced with encouraging science and mathematics teachers to explore issues of diversity was in getting them to see beyond the level of content they have to cover and recognise how to utilise opportunities within the curriculum to elicit diversity aspects:

If you asked a maths teacher, it's probably not a top priority for them. They would be aware of it, but without prompting it probably wouldn't be listed in their top 3 priorities. Why? For subject specialists time is so crowded with the need to deliver content. It's obvious for them to say that such things belong in Religious Education for example. (Secondary Headteacher - School A)

Secondary headteachers drew attention to the pressure for academic success and raising achievement levels which leads to subject knowledge being prioritised.

One of the primary case study schools had until recently been in 'serious weaknesses' the priority in terms of the curriculum had been given to improving standards. The headteacher of this school also commented on the absence of a government directive requiring schools to deliver a diverse curriculum. It was suggested that this was particularly important for those teachers with little experience of teaching in ethnically diverse schools.

For one teacher the greatest challenge for staff when doing diversity issues is to be objective:

You got to be very careful that your own thoughts don't come across because it's an issue that can be quite subjective. ... It's like politics you can't bring your own politics into the classroom. (Primary PSHE teacher – School E)

Finally, timetabling and the 'sheer volume' of things that a teacher has to cover in a scheme of work were also considered to provide particular challenges.

Impact of measures promoting diversity

School C had undertaken an assessment of their curriculum diversity initiatives targeting African-Caribbean pupils. The impact was measured through pupil feedback (via

interviews) on their experience of the curriculum and pupil attainment. The positive outcomes led to the school adopting similar strategies with their Pakistani pupils. Other schools drew on anecdotal evidence to indicate what they had perceived as having an impact. For example, at school A (a mainly White school), the headteacher outlined the impact in terms of ‘changing and challenging students’ perceptions about racism, and actively promoting an international approach.

For one primary headteacher, the most significant impact had been his school’s lead contribution to the development of the GARP project (Integrating Global and Antiracist Perspectives within the Primary Curriculum) and ultimately staff practice:

It has brought together all the ideas (on diversity) into one place so that now people have got a very quick and easy reference which staff can transfer the ideas into their schemes of work. (Primary Headteacher - School D)

It is also worth noting that the multiethnic case study schools had in common Ofsted reports which drew attention to the high level of racial harmony, respect for and value of, cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic diversities, and the good relationships that exist in each school.

Continuing professional development issues

One of the case study schools had benefited from consultant support, which had enabled them to develop their practice and approach to delivering a diverse curriculum, especially in relation to meeting the needs of African-Caribbean pupils.

The case study schools argued for diversity issues being covered during initial teacher training. From experience it was felt that newly qualified teachers could not be guaranteed to have the knowledge and confidence to address such issues. It was also felt that schools could benefit from whole staff training, which would enable staff to share ideas and look at appropriate resources.

Section Summary

Three of the case study schools had a multiethnic intake and three had a predominantly White pupil composition. One of the schools that we designated ‘White’ was in the early stages of becoming a multiethnic school, which was welcomed by the Head as a catalyst to valuing diversity more highly.

Most of the school staff emphasised culture, ethnicity and language when talking about diversity. In terms of experience of diversity, five of the six headteachers had acquired a wealth of experience teaching in multiethnic contexts. However, for some staff their experience of diversity was derived from their initial teacher training and their current school. The primary school located in the East Midlands and the inner London secondary school had by far the most experience in delivering a diverse curriculum, and the school in outer London the least. Both the secondary schools in the South West and the West Midlands had begun to address their practice more recently.

The case study schools with the most ethnically diverse populations had adopted a multidimensional approach to diversity, at both group level (e.g. how different ethnic groups engage in lessons) and individual pupil level (e.g. in setting individual pupil targets, understanding pupil learning styles). None of the ethnically diverse schools had sought to develop specific policies on diversity in the curriculum as it was intimated that diversity was 'second nature' to them. All of the schools aimed to value children's diversity as part of the government policy initiative '*Every Child Matters*', however, having a diverse and relevant curriculum seemed a higher priority for the multiethnic schools. Headteachers saw themselves playing a key role in this, including ensuring that teachers are trained.

Across the case study schools assemblies were used to deliver and reinforce positive diversity messages. Moreover, most teachers spoke of being encouraged to encompass diversity in their planning and teaching. The multiethnic schools were more likely to have exploited flexibility in the National Curriculum to enable them to deliver a diverse curriculum. The curriculum areas that seemed to offer the most opportunities for delivering a diverse curriculum included subjects such as history, geography, religious education, English/literacy, art and music. History specialists however felt constrained as to how far they could make the history curriculum diverse, due to the amount of topics that needed to be covered, and perceived Eurocentrism of the history curriculum. Some schools also seemed to explore diversity through themed days/months (e.g. Black History Month, languages day, international days, diversity/multi-culture day, global youth day).

Pupils in multiethnic schools were more likely to learn about diverse cultures/groups at a global level. However, most wanted to learn more about the different British peoples. Although some pupils enjoyed a diverse curriculum there was evidence to suggest that several pupils in the multiethnic schools were 'bored' with doing diversity. Moreover, some pupils' experience of the religious education curriculum did not match their actual lived experience.

Some teachers seemed to find it difficult to explore diversity issues and/or ask pupils from particular ethnic groups questions about their background because of their own lack of confidence in their own knowledge of different ethnic/cultural groups. Moreover, a major concern for both White and multiethnic schools is the fact that pupil experience of diversity could be 'narrow'. However, while multiethnic schools seemed more confident in addressing such narrowness, heads of mainly White schools (particularly primary) were wary of presenting diversity issues in a 'contrived' way. Another key challenge to delivering a diverse curriculum related to pupils getting a stronger input on diversity from some teachers rather than others, some school staff worried at how to reflect the diversity of individual schools; particularly where there is a huge level of diversity (e.g. 60 languages spoken). There was also uncertainty amongst most schools as to how diversity issues could be explored through mathematics and science. Concerns about lack of resources, volume of topics that needed to be covered, and a lack of clear government directive over diversity also raised problems.

Only one of the case study schools had undertaken an assessment of the initiatives they had implemented to promote diversity – however, Ofsted reports for the multiethnic schools drew attention to the high level of racial harmony and good relationships that existed in each school. One of the case study schools had benefited from consultant support. The case study schools also argued for diversity issues being covered during initial teacher training, and it was also felt that schools could benefit from whole staff training which would enable staff to share ideas and look at appropriate resources.

10. CASE STUDY FINDINGS: CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION, SHARED VALUES AND BRITISH IDENTITIES

This section explores the provision of citizenship education in the case study schools, teachers' and pupils' views in relation to their understanding of shared British values and common British identities. We discuss the ways in which schools attempt to develop individual pupil (and British) identities, and perceived challenges to promoting discussions around shared values and developing British identities. Also explored are school staff attitudes to the possible addition of Modern, British, Cultural and Social History in the citizenship education curriculum, and whether adopting such an approach will help pupils to foster a better understanding of how Britain is today, and enable them to move towards a conception of a modern British identity.

Citizenship education

Teaching citizenship

In most of the case study schools citizenship education was not taught as a discrete subject. It was offered through Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). There were clear distinctions between the emphasis placed on citizenship education by primary and secondary schools. Citizenship education was given less emphasis at the primary phase owing to it not being a statutory requirement.

Although the secondary schools alluded to citizenship education not having as high a priority as other curriculum subjects, it was evident that these schools had begun to prioritise citizenship education more. In one case this was the result of criticism from Ofsted, and in another, an internal Key Stage 4 audit on citizenship education which revealed weaknesses in relation to developing knowledge and understanding of 'community and diversity'. This coincided with criticism from pupils themselves (as part of a school survey). Such criticism led one secondary school to introduce a half citizenship GCSE, which it is argued will allow the school to map citizenship across Key Stage 3, and a second to establish a citizenship education department and develop 'proper schemes of work'. The prioritizing of citizenship education in this school was regarded as essential because of the perceived 'insularity' of the school community and the consequent need to broaden pupils' understanding of ethnic and cultural diversity:

We have a clear and strong objective to make students aware about diversity. They live in a very cocooned White area, with very little real knowledge about other cultures. It's a real challenge – especially as the BNP are pretty strong in [the area]. Last year the BNP left leaflets in the school car park. We have an ongoing issue with racist language being used in the school. Some kids will call another kid 'Paki' or 'nigger' if they get a suntan. (Secondary Headteacher - School A)

Developing an understanding of ethnic and cultural diversity through citizenship

School A has a programme called 'Vision Works', which is a package targeting social skills but which also focuses on pupils in Years 7-8 'working together'. The school has a series of 'off timetable' enrichment days targeted at Year 8, of these one is designated 'diversity' day. Year 8 is a key focus owing to Year 7 having to 'deal with coming to a new school' and in Year 9 they have SATs.

Until recently, citizenship education in the third secondary school was a subject that was 'timetabled last' and usually given to a teacher with a 'spare hour' on his or her timetable. This arrangement had since improved with citizenship being delivered by a 'team of dedicated teachers'; one of whom had completed her certification for citizenship, an element of which focused on 'diversity and difference'. Although the aim in this school is to move to a position where citizenship is delivered by more teachers trained in citizenship, it was argued that having the subject delivered by other subject specialists (e.g. art, music and history) allows different elements of citizenship to be brought to the forefront. For example, through the medium of art pupils were able to explore the influence of the media on citizenship.

Five of the six case study schools allocated an hour a week for citizenship education, but at the primary level this may be done in 20 or 30 minute sessions, and may 'come up as incidental discussion or at circle time, or through literacy'. School assemblies also provided opportunities for citizenship issues to be explored:

The whole school assemblies are all on sort of morals, working together, living together, taking examples, from a variety of different experiences across nationalities, across religions, sharing stories through religions etc. (Primary Headteacher – School F)

During one of our school visits a special assembly was observed on how pupils have 'the power to ruin someone's day with a hurtful word or action' and how they can 'make the choice not to'.

While there was no specific citizenship teaching at one primary school, the leadership team aimed to engender pupils' understanding of citizenship values through adult interaction:

What I'm really pleased about with this school is that because it is open plan children see the interaction between adults all the time. Not just as staff, it's all the other adults that are coming to school, like you as a visitor, like the parents who come in at the beginning and end of the day. I don't know what citizenship label you could put on that, but it's to do with children witnessing the way that adults do things, and then us encouraging them to replicate that by working in groups, working in pairs, working with somebody they'd never worked with before, mixing it up so that they are encouraged into a situation where they have to deal with people that they don't normally deal with. Those sorts of things are what I would say are important. (Primary Headteacher – School D)

These primary schools also sought to develop pupils' understanding of citizenship issues in a cross-curricular format, for example through literacy. School F's Race Equality policy stipulates that in teaching and learning 'all staff will create an environment where all pupils can contribute fully and feel valued' and that the curriculum will be planned in such a way as to 'encourage thoughtful responses to and positive attitudes towards diversity'. However, the following example from one of our classroom observations of a Year 6 literacy lesson in School F, seems to suggest that there is a need for teachers in developing pupil understanding of citizenship and citizenship skills, to help pupils to be more accepting of those who are perceived as 'different' (whether this is in relation to ethnicity, social class, friendship groups and/or team working). During the observation the researchers noted:

The class consisted of 23 pupils of whom two were Asian, one Chinese and the rest were White. The teacher asked the pupils what it means to be a citizen; 'What qualities do you need to be a good citizen of this class?' ... The teacher wanted the pupils to show her how they could work together as a team. The pupils were told to go outside the classroom and stand on the grass next to someone 'you trust'. The pupils were then asked why they were standing next to these particular pupils. For example, three White girls had chosen to stand next to each other because they were able to tell each other secrets and knew that they would be kept. A group of White boys suggested they could rely on their friends to catch them if they fell backwards. Most pupils had chosen their friends i.e. people they felt 'comfortable with'. They suggested that trust was based on 'loyalty', 'being friends' and 'knowing someone a long time'. The pupils were then asked to stand next to someone they 'sort of trust but they are not quite comfortable with'. We observed two White boys who grouped with a Chinese boy because 'we're friends'. However, while one Asian boy was accepted by two White boys another appeared to be pushed away by the same two White boys. The Asian boy who was rejected made several attempts to join this grouping, but was unsuccessful. We also noticed a White boy who was left entirely on his own. When the pupils were asked to stand next to someone they 'sort of trust but they are not quite comfortable with', the Asian boys found themselves together but were clearly uncomfortable with each other. A White boy that was excluded before was observed still walking around trying to be accepted, but not really as he said he 'did not trust anyone'. The teacher asked the White boy who he was with and he responded 'no one'.

It is worth noting that while it is understood that the purpose of the exercise was to develop pupils' comprehension of citizenship and team working skills, that the particular approach adopted by the teacher was viewed by the observers as problematic, given that it led to some pupils (minority ethnic and White) being isolated and there was no discussion by the teacher of why excluding pupils in this way is considered wrong.

PSHE lessons in Years 4 and 5 were used by a primary school in the North East to challenge stereotypes. Additional work has been conducted with pupils through the 'Kick Racism out of Football' initiative. However, it was evident from one of the discussion groups at this school where White pupils continuously referred to Black people as 'coloured' that some pupils did not understand why such terms are unacceptable.

In the same primary school, a Year 2 topic on 'the sea and seafarers' was viewed by school staff as a useful way of developing pupils' understanding of local communities

and roles and responsibilities in the community. A primary school located in a multiethnic area gave a number of examples of the ways in which they facilitated pupils engaging in the local community (e.g. through the local Mosque, Hindu temple, churches and annual carnival).

It is worth noting that although primary schools are proactive in their development of citizenship values, it would seem that some PHSE teachers would like to have a better understanding of citizenship education and more specialist expertise:

We have network meetings for PSHE Co-ordinators and I know a few years ago we had meetings where people said, 'but what is citizenship?' They didn't really understand what it meant. I have my understanding of it. I don't know whether it's the same as other people's, but I think it's a woolly area and people aren't really clear exactly what citizenship means, particularly in the primary sector. (Primary PSHE teacher-School E)

Exploring identity issues

Most of the schools had implemented strategies for exploring identity issues with pupils. For example, two primary schools made reference to the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme which deals with aspects of identity, the skills needed to help pupils be responsible citizens, develop relationships with others and deal with emotions. SEAL is covered through PSHE. One school's exploration of identity issues was supported by its race equality policy, which aimed to:

Help every pupil develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is positive and yet open to change, and that is receptive and respectful towards other identities. (Race Equality Policy - School F)

Some staff reported feeling encouraged to explore issues of identity in their teaching. Identity issues whilst not covered in all schools, seemed to be explored during PSHE/citizenship education and English in secondary schools, and through circle time, PSHCE, literacy and classroom discussions in primary schools. Where such discussions occurred they tended to focus on where pupils come from, where they see their roots, linguistic elements (including accents) and what their identity means to them at an individual and cultural level:

They [teachers] said it's special to have a different accent because we speak Geordie and in Liverpool they speak Scousa and down in London, Cockney. (White boy, Year 6, School E)

Nevertheless, from the pupil discussion groups it was evident that schools did not necessarily explore White British (e.g. English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish), mixed heritage and/or other new British identities. For example, at the end of a focus group discussion in a multiethnic primary school, a mixed heritage child informed one of the researchers that she has a Jamaican father and an English mother. This pupil suggested that her lessons were 'boring' because 'in our class all you learn about is White English people'. During our focus group discussions we noted pupils from other mixed heritage

backgrounds. These included for example, Italian and English, French and English, Finnish and English, and Greek and English. Some of these pupils with mixed heritage backgrounds were concerned that their particular backgrounds were not explored in school.

At one primary school it was reported that opportunities to discuss identity issues sometimes arose when pupils were absent from school due to celebrating religious festivals. It was noticeable, as a result of classroom observations, that some teachers do not necessarily seize opportunities to explore religious identity ‘differences’ amongst pupils. For example, an observation of a Year 3 group (in a predominantly White school) covering the topic ‘About Me’ in literacy, noted a Muslim pupil who had written that he was good at earning money. However, the teacher did not ask the pupil why he considered himself good at earning money. When one of the researchers asked him about this, it emerged that he was rewarded by his parents for maintaining his fast during the period of Ramadan. This pupil, and another primary aged Muslim pupil in a different school who was observed fasting during lunch, were asked if other pupils in their respective schools understood why they fasted. Both suggested that unless the pupils were Muslim they did not. Discussions with these two Muslim pupils about their fasting also led onto further explorations of their individual identities and those of the researcher concerned, with the pupils questioning the researcher about her own identity. These responses (and those highlighted above) would seem to indicate that there is a need for wider identity discussions to take place in the classroom.

Example of British identity development

In Year 9 we tend to focus on the individual and get them to think about their background. In Year 10 we look at identity and we do quite a bit of work on multiculturalism in Britain. We look at what is your identity, do you see yourself as British, Black British, Asian British, a British Muslim? Do you see yourself as something completely different? We talk about how Britain has benefited from having such a range of cultures and also handling problems with segregation and discrimination, also why some people see diversity as being something less of a good thing and looking at why we have discrimination and [community] tensions. (Secondary PSHE teacher - School C)

Individual pupil identities

It was clear from the pupil discussion groups across schools that pupils regardless of their ethnic background saw themselves as having multiple identities. These identities were derived from the heritage of their parents/other relatives, where they were born and/or resided, their religion (if they had one), languages spoken (e.g. Punjabi, Kurdish, Turkish, German, Italian, Patois, French, Finnish, Dari), friendship groups, their personality and in some instances hair/eye/skin colour.

*I was born in England, my mum's from India and my dad's from here and I'm a Sikh
(Indian girl, Years 10-11, School C)*

I was born in Russia and I spent half my life there. I'm originally Afghan and ...I'm a Muslim (Russian girl, Years 10-11, School C)

A person's personality was considered particularly important 'because just saying where you come from does not show who you are'.

Some pupils emphasised 'English', localised (e.g. regional, countryside, village and town) and community identities, which can be very narrow. For example:

My village where I live is quite insular and then you've got your own little community which I would be in, so like I'm in one which is basically just two streets. So I talk to everybody in that street and that's about it'. (White boy, Years 10-11, School A)

I'm more Geordie because I speak more Geordie words than English. (White boy, Year6, School E)

Some minority ethnic pupils complained about teachers making the wrong assumptions about their ethnic identity. For example:

My teacher ... she thought that I came from Mexico and I don't. She said: 'what country do you come from?' I said: 'Bangladesh' and she said: 'you don't look like that'. She said: 'you look more like Mexican'. (Bangladeshi girl, Years 7-8, School B)

The leadership team of a multiethnic secondary school acknowledged that their staff sometimes based their assumptions about a pupil's ethnic identity on pupil appearance, but suggested that what teaching staff needed was the confidence to be able to ask pupils how they perceive their identity.

It would seem that although some pupils spoke languages other than English these 'home' languages were used in friendship groups rather than in lessons, and were not drawn upon by their teachers. It was also apparent that pupils were more likely to be asked about ethnic/cultural/linguistic background (or given work to do) in English/literacy, religious education, and/or where they had a new teacher (and the teacher wanted to know something personal about the pupils). In one primary school when a new pupil from overseas joined a class, teachers seemed to utilise this as an opportunity to get other pupils to say hello to the new pupil in his/her language. Where pupils were studying a modern foreign language they might be asked to describe their family and discuss their culture, background and languages spoken.

Although citizenship education teachers suggested that they did work on identities with pupils in Year 10 it was the younger aged pupils (e.g. Years 7-8) who acknowledged covering such elements in their citizenship lessons:

In citizenship in Year 7 we did a lesson on 'who do we think we are' and we were just writing about our background and what we think about the area that we live in and what we like and dislike about it. (White female, Year 7-9, School C)

At an individual school level, pupils in more ethnically diverse schools concurred that their background and those of other pupils were respected.

People aren't racist here ...there's so many different ethnicities in the school, no one can get really picked on as being the odd one out cos most people have got people to relate to. (White female, Year 10, School C)

Delivering citizenship education through other curriculum areas

At the primary level it was felt that literacy offered possibilities for exploring citizenship values through persuasive writing. In secondary, it was suggested that cross-curricular citizenship education links could be developed between the subjects of history and English. For example, if the topic of immigration is to be explored in history then in English different texts that explore peoples' experiences of immigration in Britain could be used. A secondary history teacher who also teaches citizenship education gave an example of the type of cross-curricular links that could be made:

We have talked about this year doing a humanities based project targeted at Year 9 pupils where we try and combine geography, history and citizenship to think about our community. So geography would look at different communities - where they come from; history - why they came here and what sort of experiences, and citizenship, would talk about issues of when they get here and are they a citizen and so on ... and then come up with some kind of project using the media, a newspaper article or a news report to bring it all together to try and make pupils see the links. (Secondary History teacher – School C)

This teacher also argued that history was a 'good way' of challenging pupils' negative views about immigrants and refugees, and helping them to discuss their feelings towards different ethnic groups. It was further argued that such discussions could be followed up in further discussions in citizenship lessons.

Unlike English, mathematics and science were perceived as more problematic subjects. Mathematics offers the potential for pupils to construct graphs or reports about their identity using statistics and other calculations, but we are not sure if this potential was exploited. Secondary headteachers suggested that both areas required further exploration.

Challenges to delivering citizenship education

There was a consensus amongst secondary headteachers and school staff that the biggest constraint they encountered in delivering citizenship education was in having the subject taught by non subject specialists:

I had never taught citizenship and then all of a sudden, 'here you are, here is a book, you are doing citizenship'. I think there is more and more of that coming in and some staff don't feel comfortable to do it. (Secondary PSHE teacher – School B)

We have a special faculty for it now, but you're still getting teachers reading the lesson plan only as they walk in the door to the classroom. (Secondary PSHE teacher – School A)

It was argued that more specialist input would be required if schools are to promote effective discussion of shared British values and identities.

The ability of these secondary schools to be effective in their delivery of citizenship seemed also to be constrained by a lack of time to develop citizenship skills (in an hour) and/or to get involved in community projects which would help to elicit a wider understanding of local communities. Two secondary schools were further constrained by a lack of physical space, which impacted on their ability to have off timetable days and/or to have large groups of children presenting work to other year groups.

Shared values

Teachers' understanding of shared British values

As part of developing a wider understanding of teacher practice in relation to promoting shared British values through citizenship education teachers and headteachers were asked about their understanding of shared British values. There was concern about whether all Britons do in fact share the same values - '*You start worrying me when you say shared*' (Primary Head teacher – School D). Questions were raised as to whether British values are distinctive or similar to the values (e.g. honesty, fairness, justice, democracy, freedom of speech) supported by other countries.

A London secondary headteacher alluded to British values being centred on 'tolerance' and 'inclusion'. He argued that such tolerance and inclusion only had 'real value' and meaning in London and that 'the further you move away from London the less those values have any impact on the way people interrelate' with each other. Thus for one teacher in another multiethnic secondary school, a notion of shared citizenship values that included 'an acceptance of others', and 'the right to follow your customs, traditions, culture in whichever way you want to' is something that Britain is still aspiring to.

It was generally felt that there was a danger in trying to over-analyse British values (and 'Britishness') and that what was required in citizenship education were debates about British values and whether they are shared or not. There was further disquiet that disagreement with shared British values would 'be used as a stick to beat some groups of people over the head with'.

British identities

Teachers' perceptions of British identities

As with shared British values, both headteachers and school staff found the terms 'Britishness' and British identities difficult to define. The following example is typical of some of the comments received:

I don't know, 'British' is just a word on your passport. I don't think people are defined by the spot where they're born. Nationality is merely bureaucracy. (Secondary PSHE teacher – School A)

Precise definitions of British identities were considered difficult especially given that the indigenous British population is itself 'immensely' diverse.

I don't think there is one British identity, is there? (Primary PSHE Co-ordinator – School D)

Several gave examples of regional, national and class differences. Definitions were further compounded where schools encouraged pupils to think of themselves as living in communities rather than national groupings:

That's really difficult; I think it's very difficult with our children because we tend to think in terms of communities. We start from the home community, the school community, the wider community ... and given that we all come from different roots in any case it's hard to know. (Primary Headteacher – School E)

A primary headteacher also questioned whether White British people have a 'strong feeling of Britishness' and if 'Norman Tebbit tests'² could be equally applied to them.

Understandings of British identities appeared to be informed by respondents' ethnic background, their own experiences of 'Britishness' and the communities their schools served. For example, a secondary headteacher in London juxtaposed his own experiences of being brought up in Ireland in a period of anti-British politics with his experience of teaching and living in London. This led him to conclude that it would be difficult for schools teaching in multiethnic contexts to foster a shared British identity amongst pupils, especially where schools have got pupils with 'split identities' (i.e. individuals who are living with two or more cultures and/or mixed heritages). It was also thought that British culture outside London was outmoded and was not reflective of British diversity in its entirety:

I think creating a British identity is going to be very, very difficult until there is a way of dealing with people who have got other cultures and find it hard to step outside them or to include some of the kind of surrounding culture into their own... I think while we don't do work on allowing people to take bits of the British culture in and to give back bits of their culture I think we won't have a British culture because I think the British culture outside London is 50 years out of date ... I think it is still locked into post war values. It is locked into a White culture. (Secondary Headteacher - School B)

However, it should be noted that even within London it was acknowledged that some individuals were similarly locked into a White British/English identity/culture, and as such were likely to influence similar attitudes in schools amongst pupils and staff:

2. According to Norman Tebbit unless minority ethnic groups support England in cricket when they are playing opponents of their own ethnic origin/identity, they are not 'truly' British (see Appendix B for further discussion).

We've still got little pockets who have a strong White British identity and that is an English identity. (Primary Headteacher – School F)

It was argued that where individuals remained locked into a culture that does not contribute to tolerance and inclusion then 'we are never going to get an identity that does actually have those values' or attempts to transmit appropriate/inclusive British cultural signals. It was also felt that any definition of 'Britishness' and/or development of common British identities would need to recognise that some pupils are not British born and that individuals not only self define their identity (or have it defined by their parents), but have multiple identities which may or may not incorporate 'Britishness'.

PSHE teachers worried that they might be expected to educate pupils to conform to a particular version of 'Britishness' - 'Do you say you've got to be part of this group or that group?' – which was considered difficult given that some pupils in schools are not British (e.g. asylum seekers and refugees) and some are only in Britain temporarily.

The senior management team of a multiethnic inner-city school were concerned that an imposed curriculum definition of 'Britishness' would lead to pupils being 'pigeonholed' into a particular type of 'Britishness', and result in individual ethnic differences being disregarded which may negatively affect pupil attainment. Although accepting that ethnic categories can be useful, it was argued that using 'big terms' like 'Britishness' or 'Asian British' can be 'quite dangerous because they are not informative':

'Asian British' isn't always very helpful in this school. We had a questionnaire from the DfES and they [the pupils] were required to denote their ethnicity, and all it said was 'Asian'. Well for our pupils if you're a Pakistani or an Indian it makes a big difference or if you're a Kashmiri Pakistani that will make a difference as well. ... These big terms on the whole aren't terribly useful and what we tend to do is accept that diversity can be a very miniscule difference in the way that you see yourself as related to other people. ... It's not just the ethnic grouping of our children, their home backgrounds within that are so diverse and we find that is just such a huge influence on everything ... And the other thing is that a lot of teachers tend to assume that Caribbean pupils in this school are actually from Jamaica, and they're not. These are broad suppositions made and it is very different and there are so many different elements within that. (Deputy Head – School C)

Furthermore, heads and teachers alike seemed wary of any attempts by the government to explicitly define 'Britishness', especially where they saw their own identities being much broader – 'I'm a very European, British, English person'. For the headteacher of school A, any definitions of 'Britishness' would only serve to 'set up' White British pupils (particularly those with little or no experience of interacting with other communities) into making 'negative comparisons with other national identities'. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that at some stage 'Britishness' may need to be defined in order to avoid White pupils defining 'Britishness' in ways that exclude minority ethnic groups:

I think we're on dangerous territory when asking about British identity. Why? If you asked them [pupils] to define British identity they could be quite nasty (Secondary Headteacher – School A)

A teacher with mixed heritage children further argued that her children only understood the English part of themselves when it was contrasted with the other parts. Suggesting that ‘Englishness’ (and by default ‘Britishness’) is hard to see in isolation; it needs a counterpoint. For these case study schools therefore, school context, ethnic composition and individual pupil definition were considered salient in any future curriculum developments in relation to definitions of ‘Britishness’ and how the concept should be broached.

Pupils’ perceptions of ‘Britishness’

Pupils were asked whether or not they considered themselves British. Only one pupil found this extremely difficult to answer and insisted repeatedly that she ‘did not get it’. Most considered themselves British partly because they/their parent(s) were born in Britain and/or had a British passport/citizenship which defined them as British:

I think I am British and I know I am British because I’ve got a British passport (Black girl, Years 7-8, School B)

It’s a citizenship thing ... cos there’s no sort of British gene is there? We come from loads of migrations all coming into one country and we’re always changing anyway. (White boy, Years 10-11, School A)

Pupils’ perceptions of being British seemed to be influenced by their family heritage. For example:

I think British because my family comes from lots of different parts of England ... I don’t know why I think more British because saying British rather than English joins all the countries together as though we are allies and I like thinking that (White girl, Years 9, School A)

I think of myself as British even though I’m half Irish because it is only my parents who are a bit Irish. (White girl, Year 5, School F)

I think I’m a little bit British because I was born here, but my parents were born in Bangladesh. (Asian girl, Year 5, School F)

I think I am more British because I lived in Scotland until I was three and because I go back there, if someone asks me I don’t think Scottish or English, I think I am British, the whole of it. (White girl, Year 9, School A)

They seemed to be also informed by the media, where they lived, through participating in a shared language (e.g. English), eating traditional British food (e.g. fish and chips) and also experiencing other cultures’ cuisine and music. For some, being British means having access to a range of opportunities (e.g. education), economic resources, and religious/democratic freedoms. Interestingly, a White British secondary pupil argued that she was British because she was born in Britain and does not have a religion. For this pupil, non-British people were more likely to denote themselves as having a religion.

Where a pupil was born outside Britain, there was a sense that ‘Britishness’ was something that could be acquired after a period of time living in Britain. A Chinese pupil gave the example of her mother becoming a British citizen after living in Britain for eight years. There was also a sense that ‘Britishness’ and British culture could be learnt. However, for one pupil in a mainly White school, while professing that ‘everyone’s British’, he concluded that only White people born in Britain can be British:

Well not everyone, because there’s someone in my street that’s from Nigeria. (White boy, Year 6, School E)

This particular viewpoint can however, be contrasted with that of another White primary pupil who explained that it was possible for minority ethnic people to have an English and therefore a British heritage:

There’s a cricket player [in our school] and he looks like he comes from India, but he’s from England, so he’s quite brown cos I think it’s his dad that’s English and his mum’s a bit Indian. So he looks like he’s Indian, but he’s really English. (White boy, Year 5, School F)

For some respondents being British means having ‘the same rights as everyone else’, ‘being treated fairly’, respecting and interacting with other communities while at the same time retaining one’s culture:

Isn’t British really all about being able to communicate with anyone whether you’re in a multicultural place [or not] where you’ve got one White person living next door to an Asian person or a Black person? Does it matter what community you’re in as long as you’re mixing with everyone when you’re in certain places? (6th form debating group, School C)

There was a level of uncertainty amongst some pupils (even if they had lived in Britain for a long time and/or had British parents) whether they were British or not. For example:

I don’t know, I’ll just say I’m English/German/Irish. (White boy, Year 10-11, School A)

I’m a bit English, Danish, Spanish, Welsh and Scottish as well. (White girl, Year 9, School A)

I’m not British cos my granny’s Japanese, my dad was born in Huddersfield and his dad was mostly a lot Scottish, so I’m half Scottish, a third English and a tiny bit Japanese. (White boy, Year 5, School F)

Some made reference to ‘feeling’ and ‘thinking’ British. Similar utterances were made by some non-indigenous pupils who were born in Britain.

For one indigenous pupil, his experience of living in Australia had served to accentuate his feeling of being ‘different’ and his British identity – ‘it made me feel more British because everyone around me was Australian’.

Amongst indigenous and non-indigenous British pupils there were references to being English and British. It would seem however, that in some schools non-indigenous pupils were being discouraged from regarding themselves as English, as the following example illustrates:

I used to think that I was English until Monday because in history our teacher said: 'put your hand up if you're English' and I put my hand up and you know that I'm like Turkish, and then he asked: 'so who in your family is English?' And no one is English in my family, so then he goes, 'you're not English'. And now I know I'm not English, I'm British. (Turkish girl, Years 7-8, School B)

Similarly, another Turkish female who considered herself British felt discouraged by her peers from referring to herself as such:

When I first came here people asked me where I came from ... and before I even said British, they were like, 'are you Turkish?' (Turkish girl, Years 7-8, School B)

For this particular pupil, being asked if she was Turkish when she considered herself British made her feel 'quite bad'.

Perceptions of not being British were also reinforced where minority ethnic pupils had experienced a lack of tolerance and acceptance:

Some people are like 'go back to your country' and that's one of the worst things to say because it's like different people come here and they just can't tell everyone to get out. (Black female, Years 7-8, School B)

Sometimes in the past when I've said my mum's German ... both my brother and I have been bullied because of it and even at this school when we've had German exchanges, a lot of them [visitors] get called 'Nazis' and 'Hitler Youth' (White boy, Year 10-11, School A)

From the discussion groups it would seem that pupils living in predominantly White areas are more likely to be vociferous in their articulations of 'Britishness'. The following extracts derived from School A (Key Stage 4 boys group) give an indication of the type of reflection that some pupils brought to their discussions of 'Britishness':

When I think of British I always think they are more of a group. Like the British is more say the pre-Saxon population.

I think more and more people are saying: 'I'm English, I'm Welsh, I'm Scottish rather than British nowadays. I don't know, you live in Britain but you're not necessarily British.

While some White British pupils (in mainly White schools) were very specific in their articulations of their British heritage (e.g. 'I'm one sixteenth Irish') it was evident that some White British pupils (in multiethnic schools) undervalued their own heritage and

consequently, were less confident in highlighting those particular aspects. They offered the following reasons as to why:

You're bored with it, you're just British. (White girl, Year 10, School C)

I'm not from a Caribbean country or an exotic country or even France or Spain. I'm from nowhere like that, I'm just plain British. (White girl, Year 10, School B)

It's boring. I just want to be like from a different race, or quarter or something. (White female, Years 4-6, School D)

It's like when I say in citizenship 'oh my granddad was part Welsh' everyone says: 'yeah but that's British'. (White girl, Year 10, School B)

As well as negative pupil response, the reaction of some teachers (and the lack of teaching around the area) seemed to give some White British pupils the impression that their heritage was not 'different' and therefore was less significant than pupils from ethnically diverse backgrounds:

There's lots of different White people, there's Scottish, British, English ... but like when they [teachers] say: 'what are your backgrounds?' we don't say: 'I'm half Scottish, I'm half Irish', and when we say: 'we're from England, we're White', some people say: 'I'm from Jamaica and Barbados, we're different'. (White girl, Year 10, School B)

This perception is further supported by our classroom observations of geography lessons in two ethnically diverse schools (primary and secondary). In the primary school, a Year 3 class was asked to think about somewhere they had been in the world, and if they had not visited a different country to think of somewhere where their family came from or they had family ties/friends. In the ensuing class discussion (after hearing the names of countries such as India, the Congo, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, Poland) a White British pupil who was born in England said she 'didn't come from nowhere'. The pupil's comment led to the teacher adding the East Midlands to the list of countries/places where pupils had visited, and to the teacher expressing sadness because 'she [the pupil] does come from somewhere'. Following the teacher's comment, the girl in question, asked the teacher to show her where the East Midlands was on the map. In the secondary school, the topic of the geography lesson was 'migration around the world and the UK'. The lesson sought to explore the family origins of the pupils (i.e. where their parents were born and whether they had always lived in the West Midlands). Most of the White pupils had origins in England, yet the teacher appeared less enthusiastic about these (leading to them not being commented upon) and tended to emphasise 'weird and wonderful' countries, and wanted instead to know if anyone had an origin they thought was 'unique to them'. A small number of pupils had connections with Australia, St Kitts, Pakistan, India, Germany, Cuba and Jamaica. The teacher made several references to St Kitts 'as a dot' and being 'hard to find' on the map, the teacher offered to help with this and seemed disappointed at the lack of pupils in the class from Africa and South America (which he had in his year 7 class the previous year).

While the intention in these lessons was to widen pupils' understanding of global diversity, patterns of migration, and in the case of the secondary school, develop map reading skills, the particular teacher emphasis led to the identities/heritage of indigenous pupils being ignored. Interestingly, such an approach can also exclude second and third generation minority ethnic pupils who perceive their heritage as British. Such an approach can also contribute to teachers missing out on opportunities to explore the multiple heritages of pupils in their class. For example, in the Year 7 class observation an Asian girl wrote on her map 'parents from England and me, grandparents from India and I've an uncle from Egypt'.

Another possible reason for a perceived lower focus on 'Britishness' in lessons was put forward by primary and secondary pupils in the focus groups who suggested that perhaps teachers thought them well informed about their British heritage when they are not.

Because we live here and they think we know everything, well not everything, but most of it. (White boy, Years 3-6, School D)

A pupil who defined herself as 'just English' suggested that Irish, Welsh and Scottish people were 'more proud of their backgrounds'. Thus it could be argued that pupils with similar heritages were more likely to draw attention to these parts of their identity. Clearly, some indigenous pupils appeared to have internalised a deficit English (and British) identity. Arguably, this may have contributed to some White pupils being less concerned about learning about people from other parts of the British Isles because they did not see being born in Wales for example, as 'anything that makes you different'. Some pupils went as far as to classify 'Britain' as 'the same thing as England'.

Developing an understanding of shared values and British identities

Learning about being British

Of the six schools only two (both primary) seemed to have looked specifically at Wales as part of the British identity, and only because the teachers concerned had a Welsh background. While the pupils welcomed this opportunity they felt it was more about them listening rather than getting an opportunity to do some work in relation to this.

It is worth noting that the question as to whether pupils consider themselves British or not led to some interesting discussions about identity and religion. For example, some secondary pupils talked about whether Muslim women should be allowed to wear the niqab (i.e. a veil that is drawn across the face leaving the eyes visible) and why some do not. Some also questioned why some Muslim girls wear headscarves in school and why some do not. It was felt that such understanding would lead to greater cultural understanding of diverse groups. The pupils seemed to enjoy this wider discussion on contemporary issues and intimated that they should be allowed to explore these issues further. Some also wanted opportunities to discuss what being British means and why some people may not feel British:

*People like me that feel they're not British; there should be more stuff about that.
(Minority ethnic girl, Year 10, School C)*

However, it was evident that while some pupils valued learning about different cultures and traditions and welcomed the opportunity to develop their knowledge further, some pupils experiences of discussions relating to identity issues in citizenship education had not been particularly positive. The following example illustrates the type of difficulties and lack of understanding that could arise in such discussions:

A lot of them [pupils] just contrast with everyone else. Some people don't want to listen, they don't ... but it's like when you feel so strongly about something when someone contradicts it, it gets a bit out of hand and you get a bit annoyed. ... I think it's hard to make teenage people growing up fully understand other people's points of view and respect their point of view ... normally you get quite disrespectful things being said, but you don't realise they're so disrespectful to [the] other person cos you don't understand where they're coming from. (White girl, Year 10, School C)

Some pupils also felt they were less likely to widen their understanding of their British heritage and/or other groups where their learning pertained to reading from texts rather than engaging in discussions:

In citizenship they'll tell you to turn to the page in your book, they'll read out the paragraph but not explain it in detail and you'll get one or two questions on it. I think it's better when we have discussions. I find it so much better and I take it in more. (White girl, Years 7-8, School B)

I don't think I'm becoming more British or less British by anything that I've done or heard or anything I've learnt (White boy, Years 10-11, School A)

School role promoting discussion about shared values and British identities

There was agreement amongst teachers that schools had a role to play in terms of providing frameworks where questions can be asked and discussion facilitated. However, one primary headteacher said that promoting common British identities was not a thought he came to school with on a Monday morning.

All of the case study schools reported promoting discussion about shared values (through PSHE/citizenship, other curriculum areas and assemblies), but this is in terms of developing an understanding of shared school values (e.g. behavioural, moral and academic expectations), respecting each other and living within a school community. This was regarded as essential particularly in schools where there is a more diverse ethnic pupil population. As well as through discussion, a secondary headteacher argued that often the most effective way of broaching sensitive issues was through 'a throw away remark from a teacher or individual interactions between teachers and pupils'.

Challenges to promoting and managing discussions about shared values and common British identities

The main challenges to promoting discussion and developing shared understanding were considered to be teacher knowledge, experience and confidence in handling such discussions. It was argued that teachers needed to have the foresight to know that not only do such issues require sensitivity in the way things are presented and pupils' views and backgrounds are respected, but that some aspects 'could raise the temperature' and so require particular skills in handling such discussions.

If you have someone who perhaps isn't on top of the issue themselves then you have potential difficulties even in a very accommodating and contributing group. (Head Teacher – School F)

Two other challenges articulated by the headteacher of School F were in having time to explore such issues effectively, and in gaining whole staff commitment to addressing the issues concerned.

While echoing some of the sentiments expressed above, a headteacher of a mainly White secondary school saw the main challenge as being presented by his students because 'they don't see it [ethnic/cultural diversity] as a daily issue' and may inadvertently lead to them expressing prejudiced views. It was evident however, from the pupil discussion groups in this secondary school that some White British pupils have a wider understanding (than perceived by the headteacher) of ethnic/cultural diversity because of their experiences derived from living abroad (e.g. Germany, Australia) and in other parts of Britain. Moreover, it was evident that these pupils were aware of some of the complexities surrounding British identities. These pupils also seemed to have an awareness of racism (as exhibited by their parents) and the need to challenge racist attitudes.

Another difficulty identified in terms of facilitating a common British identity is the fact that some pupils may find it easier than others to express their opinions which may result in some pupils not sharing in the discussion or articulating their views.

Making sure that the Pakistani girls who never say anything are engineered into expressing opinions, that is an issue for us. (Secondary Headteacher – School C)

As earlier argued, in order to avoid reinforcing such stereotypical views as those presented above, it would seem that schools would need to develop particular strategies for engaging all pupils sensitively and effectively in group discussions.

Modern British Cultural and Social History (MBCSH)

Teachers' perceptions

Schools were asked if an understanding of Modern British Cultural and Social History (MBCSH) should be added to the citizenship education curriculum, and if yes, what it

should cover. Given that citizenship education is not a statutory requirement for primary schools, one primary headteacher felt unable to comment in an informed way.

There was a mixed reaction from other heads and teachers as to whether MBCSH should be added to the curriculum. On the one hand it was felt that the history curriculum already covered such issues, and on the other, that the citizenship education curriculum provided scope to do this, but was considered ‘overloaded’. A citizenship teacher went further and questioned whether an extra strand was needed to make MBCSH ‘more explicit’ or if instead teachers needed to have better training in citizenship education in order to ‘recognise what’s already there’. Moreover, it was intimated that if another strand was put into the Citizenship Orders then citizenship education would become ‘less flexible’ and would end up with teachers being even more ‘overwhelmed’ by the content which they are already struggling to cover in one hour a week. Ultimately, it was argued that more content would reduce the amount of time that teachers have to develop pupils’ citizenship skills (e.g. debating, researching and working with others/communities).

Questions were raised as to what would need to be taken out of the citizenship curriculum to incorporate MBCSH. One suggestion was to remove some of the enterprise activities. If it was not possible to remove any particular activities it was argued that MBCSH would need to be integrated in a way so that it fits in with activities that are already being covered.

If MBCSH is to become a fourth pillar of the citizenship curriculum it was proposed that it should explore what a modern British culture involves and it would also be worthwhile covering the following elements:

What it means to be British in British society today. How we behave, what the expectations are of us, what our expectations are of each other. If they’re bringing children from other countries ... I think it’s nice that they [children from overseas] understand and learn about us... Also I think pupils should be encouraged to talk about how society has changed over the years. (Primary Citizenship teacher - School F)

I think it ought to cover immigration into this country. I teach A level English and sometimes in the lesson something will come up about asylum seekers, now some of our girls in the 6th form, and we’re talking second generation immigrants to the country – “Asylum seekers, get them out, what are they doing here? They’re all doing this” – they accuse them of everything under the sun and when you try to present them with a certain logical inconsistency in the thinking behind all this, it’s a completely emotional response to something which they haven’t stopped to think about at all. We [schools] assume they’re getting some of this information in the 6th form, out of newspapers, listening to Newsnight etc. Well of course they don’t. I think it does literally have to be taught. (Secondary Deputy Head – School C)

It needs to be before 1948. I think it should cover the contributions to a variety of different aspects of modern life by people from all over the world. People of all sorts of different racial backgrounds because it is predominantly White ... you know if you try to look for what has been achieved by people from the Asian subcontinent or China or any other part of the world, it isn’t there. (Primary PSHE Co-ordinator – School D)

These suggestions would seem to coincide with those of secondary pupils (White and minority ethnic) who articulated wanting to know ‘how and why British people are different’, ‘why different people are here’ and ‘what is the background that made them come here?’.

A further suggestion by teachers included getting pupils to explore different communities within Britain and pupils’ own perceptions of modern British identities, including whether there is a consensus definition. Opportunities could then be provided for pupils to debate issues such as whether Britain should have integration and/or multiculturalism, and then discuss the consequences of not having either. This could then be taken further and linked to current affairs relating to citizenship (e.g. Jack’s Straw’s comments on women wearing the niqab). In one of our school visits we observed a group of sixth form pupils debating these very issues. The motion being discussed was integration versus multiculturalism. This resulted in pupils discussing issues of democracy, freedom of speech/religion/choice, racism, respecting traditions, similarity and difference, ethnic segregation, community unity/conflict, nationhood, notions of ‘Britishness’ and creating understanding of a ‘New Britain’. It was argued that ‘forcing’ everyone to be ‘the same’ (i.e. British) was ‘ridiculous’ as this would only serve to accentuate ‘differences’ and create further problems, because even if everyone is ‘the same on the outside’ it does not mean they feel ‘the same on the inside’ or that community tensions will disappear.

It was suggested that pupils’ understanding of MBCSH would need to be nurtured from an early age. It was felt that this would help both minority ethnic and White British pupils to comprehend commonalities, and in particular, go some way towards enabling White British pupils to accept that Britain is diverse rather than judge its diversity.

However, in exploring these different histories, concern was expressed that the government, teachers and/or schools should not ‘over generalise’ and should not adopt a ‘broad brush stroke’ approach as this could lead to the wrong assumptions being made. An example of this was given by School C:

With our last Ofsted, they were a team that were lifted out of the Bradford Advisory Service and they came down here, and they came with all these assumptions about the way it all works in Bradford, especially in terms of Pakistani pupils and it wasn’t right for us at all. It was not the same. We found that very difficult because they thought they knew an awful lot about us and actually, no, they didn’t. (Deputy Head – School C)

Given, such difficulties, it was argued that MBCSH would need to be underpinned by research and be ‘specific to the context’ (local area) as communities presumably sharing the same ethnic heritage may be very different in terms of their arrival (or not), location, experiences and contributions to British society.

For a secondary headteacher, if this addition is to take place, it would require the DfES to be ‘very clever’ in terms of thinking through how this might be achieved without creating further difficulties for diverse ethnic groups, and without ‘turning people off the concept because the process is flawed’. It was suggested that this would need to involve:

a lot of very different approaches in different parts of the country because I don't think that the issue of British identity is the same here [London] as it is in Watford or Manchester or Glasgow or Belfast. I think they are very different issues. ... You know if I were to go with my basic British values of inclusion and tolerance. Tolerance in a side street in Belfast or in a slum in Glasgow is going to be a very different animal from sitting in a school in Kensington or in Hackney. They are going to be different issues because people have such different starting points. (Secondary Headteacher – School B)

Importantly, it was felt that if pupils are to share in such discussions and adopt an overarching culture then consideration would need to be given as to how this can be done at an individual level and 'how close they are to that value and how far away they are'. This is salient as some individuals do not have a good experience of living in Britain and this may in turn influence their view of British values and citizenship. At an indigenous White British level, recognition would need to be given to the fact that as well as minority ethnic diversity, cultural diversity exists between the northern Irish, the Welsh, the Scots and the English, and that some groups themselves lack experience of living in ethnically and culturally diverse communities.

Providing opportunities for pupils to discuss modern British identities

Schools and teachers supported the notion of pupils being given opportunities to discuss modern British identities and what this involves. A primary headteacher thought such discussions would be more appropriate with pupils in Years 5 and 6 who by this time are already engaging in discussions.

A secondary PSHE teacher suggested that by Year 11 pupils feel much more comfortable with their peers as a result of the time they have spent together in the school, and because pupils are encouraged to respect each other's views they are able to have discussions even when they disagree with the views being expressed.

While headteachers thought discussions pertaining to British identities could be accommodated in school, some were skeptical of the 'government' defining an understanding of history for schools to implement, as this might lead to politicians 'reacting to a populist agenda' and ultimately the 'Daily Mail setting the criteria' to be used. It was further argued that there would need to be a wider educational debate as to what is meant by British identities and shared British values, and how British identities fit into a changing British society before schools are able to promote such discussion.

Challenges to promoting discussions of shared values and British identities

One of the main challenges associated with promoting such discussions related to the ethnic mix of schools. It was suggested that there were likely to be greater challenges presented in schools where the school population is less ethnically diverse, as few teachers or pupils would have knowledge and/or an understanding of different ethnic communities which could be utilised to engender effective discussion. For example:

It's a risky business in this school. You're fighting against the ignorance of kids and their parents. For example, Travellers' sites – kids have such blinkered attitudes. I'd worry about how to teach it [modern British history]. For example, in Year 11 when we're talking about race related crimes, some kids pick up stuff straight from their parents. There've been a couple of racially related incidents. It's out of ignorance, not understanding the words they use. There just isn't the [ethnic] diversity here. (Secondary PSHE teacher – School A)

In addition, teachers would need sufficient timetabled time to allow different viewpoints to be expressed. Several teachers complained of other things competing for their time.

An even greater difficulty it would seem in facilitating such discussion groups is where schools see pupils as people that can be 'slotted' into cultural groupings (and British identities):

We have refused to identify groups. We do not accept cultural groups we only accept individuals from different cultures, and so the emphasis is totally on the individual girl and her culture and her needs and her interaction with the rest of the school. (Secondary Headteacher – School B)

Developing teacher practice to promote effective discussion of shared values

It was suggested that teachers in all curriculum areas would need to be enabled to promote effective discussions on shared values and British identities and that this would need to be introduced during initial teacher training. This would allow trainee teachers to think about the issues, get the requisite skills and learn how to develop discussions sensitively:

We get NQTs who haven't really got very much idea at all. (PSHE Coordinator- School D)

For existing practitioners it was argued that they would need in-house training where 'you talk about the issues around diversity and how to deal with comments that might be inappropriate', and how to set boundaries for the discussion. A secondary teacher's experience of delivering citizenship education in a mainly White school led her to conclude that teachers in similar schools would need specific training so as to enable them to create 'the right climate' for such discussions to take place.

Section Summary

In most of the case study schools citizenship education was not taught as a discrete subject, but was offered through Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). Citizenship education was given less emphasis at the primary phase owing to it not being a statutory requirement. Although the secondary schools alluded to citizenship education not having as high a priority as other curriculum subjects, it was evident that these schools had begun to prioritise citizenship education more, in reaction to Ofsted or internal audit criticism. Five of the six case study schools allocated an hour a week for citizenship education, but at the primary level this may be done in 20 or 30 minute sessions, and may 'come up as incidental discussion or at circle time, or through literacy'.

School assemblies also provided opportunities for citizenship issues to be explored. Some PHSE teachers would like to have a better understanding of citizenship education and more specialist expertise. Amongst secondary teachers the biggest constraint they encountered in delivering citizenship education was in having the subject taught by non subject specialists. At the primary level it was felt that literacy offered possibilities for exploring citizenship values through persuasive writing. In secondary, it was suggested that cross-curricular citizenship education links could be developed between the subjects of history and English. Mathematics and science were perceived as more problematic. Lack of time for teacher training and physical space were also seen as constraints in developing citizenship education.

Whilst not covered in all schools, identity issues seemed to be explored during PSHE/citizenship education and English in secondary schools, and through circle time, literacy and classroom discussions in primary schools. Where such discussions occurred they tended to focus on where pupils come from, where they see their roots, linguistic elements (including accents) and what their identity means to them at an individual and cultural level. Nevertheless, from the pupil discussion groups it was evident that schools did not necessarily explore White British (e.g. English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish), mixed heritage and/or other new British identities. It was also noticeable, as a result of classroom observations, that some teachers do not necessarily seize opportunities to explore religious identity 'differences' amongst pupils. Although citizenship education teachers suggested that they did work on identities with pupils in Year 10 it was the younger aged pupils (e.g. Years 7-8) who acknowledged covering such elements in their citizenship lessons.

It was clear from the pupil discussion groups across schools that pupils regardless of their ethnic background saw themselves as having multiple identities. These identities were derived from the heritage of their parents/other relatives, where they were born and/or resided, their religion (if they had one), languages spoken, friendship groups, their personality and in some instances hair/eye/skin colour. Some minority ethnic pupils complained about teachers making the wrong assumptions about their ethnic identity. It would seem that although some pupils spoke languages other than English these 'home' languages were used in friendship groups rather than in lessons, and were not drawn upon by their teachers. It was also apparent that pupils were more likely to be asked about ethnic/cultural/linguistic background (or given work to do) in English/literacy, religious education, and/or where they had a new teacher (and the teacher wanted to know something personal about the pupils).

Amongst teachers it was generally felt that there was a danger in trying to over-analyse British values (and 'Britishness') and that what was required in citizenship education were debates about British values and whether they are shared or not. There was further disquiet that disagreement with shared British values would 'be used as a stick to beat some groups of people over the head with'. As with shared British values, both teachers and headteachers found the terms 'Britishness' and British identities difficult to define, especially given that the indigenous British population is itself 'immensely' diverse. Several gave examples of regional, national and class differences. Definitions were

further compounded where schools encouraged pupils to think of themselves as living in communities rather than national groupings.

Teachers argued that the development of inclusive identities would be difficult where individuals remained locked into a culture that does not contribute to tolerance and inclusion. It was also felt that any definition of 'Britishness' and/or development of common British identities would need to recognise that some pupils are not British born and that individuals not only self define their identity (or have it defined by their parents), but have multiple identities which may or may not incorporate 'Britishness'. Heads and teachers alike also seemed wary of any attempts by the government to explicitly define 'Britishness'.

Most pupils who considered themselves British did so partly because they/their parent(s) were born in Britain and/or had a British passport/citizenship. Their identities were influenced by for example the media, where they lived, through participating in a shared language (e.g. English), eating traditional British food (e.g. fish and chips) and also experiencing other cultures' cuisine and music. For some, being British means having access to a range of opportunities (e.g. education), economic resources, and religious/democratic freedoms. Where a pupil was born outside Britain, there was a sense that 'Britishness' was something that could be acquired after a period of time living in Britain. One White pupil in a mainly White school argued that only White people born in Britain can be British, whilst other pupils offered contrasting views. From the discussion groups it would seem that pupils living in predominantly White areas are more likely to be vociferous in their articulations of 'Britishness'. There was a level of uncertainty amongst some pupils (even if they had lived in Britain for a long time and/or had British parents) whether they were British or not. Some made reference to 'feeling' and 'thinking' British. Similar utterances were made by some non-indigenous pupils who were born in Britain. Amongst indigenous and non-indigenous British pupils there were references to being English and British. It would seem however, that in some schools non-indigenous pupils were being discouraged from regarding themselves as English. Perceptions of not being British were also reinforced where minority ethnic pupils had experienced a lack of tolerance and acceptance.

Some White pupils gave negative responses to being 'British' (e.g. 'it's boring'). These feelings, as well as the reaction of some teachers (and the lack of teaching around the area) seemed to give some White British pupils the impression that their heritage was not 'different' and therefore was less significant than pupils from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Another possible reason for a perceived lower focus on 'Britishness' in lessons was put forward by primary and secondary pupils who suggested that perhaps teachers thought them well informed about their British heritage when they are not.

It was evident that while some pupils valued learning about different cultures and traditions and welcomed the opportunity to develop their knowledge further, some pupils' experiences of discussions relating to identity issues in citizenship education had not been particularly positive. Some pupils also felt they were less likely to widen their

understanding of their British heritage and/or other groups where their learning pertained to reading from texts rather than engaging in discussions.

All of the case study schools reported promoting discussion about shared values (through PSHE/citizenship, other curriculum areas and assemblies), in terms of developing an understanding of shared school values (behavioural, moral and academic expectations), respecting each other and living within a school community. This was regarded as essential particularly in schools where there is a more diverse ethnic pupil population. The main challenges to promoting discussion and developing shared understanding were considered to be teacher knowledge, experience and confidence in handling such discussions.

There was a mixed reaction from heads and teachers as to whether Modern British Cultural and Social History (MBCSH) should be added to the curriculum. On the one hand it was felt that the history curriculum already covered such issues, and on the other, that the citizenship education curriculum provided scope to do this, but was considered 'overloaded'. If MBCSH is to become a fourth pillar of the citizenship curriculum it was proposed that it should explore what a modern British culture involves and it would also be worthwhile covering issues such as British identity, immigration, and the contributions of diverse groups worldwide to different aspects of modern British life. These suggestions would seem to coincide with those of secondary pupils (White and minority ethnic) who articulated wanting to know 'how and why British people are different', 'why different people are here' and 'what is the background that made them come here?'. It was suggested that pupils' understanding of MBCSH would need to be nurtured from an early age. It was felt that this would help both minority ethnic and White British pupils to comprehend commonalities, and in particular, go some way towards enabling White British pupils to accept that Britain is diverse rather than judge its diversity. In exploring these different histories, however, concern was expressed that the government, teachers and/or schools should not 'over generalise'. MBCSH would need to be underpinned by research and be specific to the local area of the school.

Schools and teachers supported the notion of pupils being given opportunities to discuss modern British identities and what this involves. It was felt that if pupils are to share in discussions about values such as inclusion and tolerance, it would be important to recognise that some individuals do not have a good experience of living in Britain and this may in turn influence their view of British values and citizenship. At an indigenous White British level, recognition would need to be given to the fact that as well as minority ethnic diversity, cultural diversity exists between the northern Irish, the Welsh, the Scots and the English, and that some groups themselves lack experience of living in ethnically and culturally diverse communities. It was argued that there were likely to be greater challenges to promoting such discussions in schools where the pupil population is less ethnically diverse, and that teachers in all curriculum areas would need to be enabled to promote effective discussions on shared values and British identities. This would need to be introduced during initial teacher training, and through continuing professional development for existing teachers.

11. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Literature review

The available evidence from the literature review suggests that in implementing a more diverse curriculum it will be necessary to consider precisely what is meant by ‘diversity’ and how this can be achieved through the curriculum. Powell (1997) suggests that the curriculum would need to meet the needs of the students in the reality in which they function. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002) teachers delivering a culturally relevant curriculum would need to be socio-culturally conscious, have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds and know about the lives of their students. It is argued that having an awareness of the backgrounds and experiences of their students will enable teachers to deliver lessons that build on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar.

Importantly, while ‘multiculturalism may broaden or diversify the perspectives that are included in the curriculum, it does not necessarily change the perspective from which the curriculum is constructed’ (Olneck, 2001:343). Writing in an American context, Olneck (2001:343) argues that, even when the contributions of diverse groups in building the nation are included the ‘story-line of building the ... nation may be preserved’. In other words having a diverse curriculum and focusing on a common national identity may not change the way particular groups are viewed or their representation of part of the ‘homogeneous’ national ‘we’. Therefore he argues that schools will need to think carefully about how diverse groups are represented in the curriculum and how notions of national identity (e.g. ‘Britishness’) are constructed so as to include diverse groups.

In preparing pupils to embrace multiethnic Britain the literature suggests that teachers will need to recognise that the identities (local/national) children adopt will be a matter of choice (Ross, 2006). Ross (2001:12) maintains that in the future identities will become more multiple and that the ways in which citizenship is experienced ‘will be contingent on the location, the time and the reference group’. It is also evident that citizenship is experienced differently depending on one’s gender, ethnicity and/or class (Osler and Starkey, 2005). Such factors, together with increasing societal diversity and globalisation, are likely to have implications for the future development of citizenship education (Banks *et al.*, 2005; Osler and Starkey, 2005). Osler and Starkey (2005:21) propose ‘a reconceptualisation of citizenship education which incorporates local, national and global perspectives’ within the curriculum and promotes diversity as ‘an asset’ which is viewed as essential if understandings of common citizenship are to develop and democracy is to work (see also Ofsted, 2006).

Clearly, if schools are to offer a more diverse curriculum which acknowledges and affirms the experience and heritage of diverse groups, as well as promote greater acceptance and understanding of diversity, citizenship values and British identities, the evidence from this literature review indicates that schools would need a commitment and responsiveness to current and historical issues that help shape the future, and an understanding of the contribution of diverse groups to the development of multiethnic

Britain. It also suggests that teachers will need to ensure that all groups are included, to foster in pupils' a greater commitment to building a more equitable society. In order to do this, teachers' will need to develop (or further develop) the requisite knowledge, skills and confidence in ITT and continuing professional development (Burtonwood, 2002; Cline *et al.*, 2002; Davies and Crozier, 2006; Home Office Cantle Report 2001; Kerr *et al.*, 2004; Maylor *et al.*, 2006; Multiverse – see Appendix A; Osler and Starkey, 2005; Suleiman and Moore, 1996; TTA, 2003; TDA, 2005; Tikly *et al.*, 2004).

Case study research

This was a small-scale study of a limited number of schools, and was in no sense representative of all schools. Our conclusions must therefore be rather generalised and individual instances and examples that we quote should not necessarily be seen as typical.

Nevertheless, we can point to a series of broad impressions and areas of agreement amongst the school staff and pupils with whom we spoke. We found a great willingness to talk about these issues from both these groups. Opinions were expressed thoughtfully, and although there were misunderstandings about some of these issues, both pupils and teachers appeared to welcome the opportunity to discuss questions of identity and belonging within the context of citizenship and the broader curriculum. Some teachers and pupils appeared to feel that they had not had such an opportunity for such an open discussion, or may have felt the area potentially too controversial.

The teachers with whom we spoke were concerned to ensure that they contributed to all their pupils' developing identities, including that of indigenous White pupils. There were a number of examples of misunderstanding about ethnicities, identities and minorities, and sometimes a lack of detailed information, but, generally teachers are open to suggestions and ideas about how to develop their skills and capacities in this area.

The pupils also showed some signs of misunderstanding and confusion, identifying some areas where the curriculum appeared to neglect aspects of identity (for example, in terms of White identities and forms of 'Britishness') and other areas where the curriculum was repetitive, and some in which aspects of religious or cultural practices were taught about in an idealised way, that did not match their own or their families' actual practice. Nonetheless, pupils appeared to be very willing to learn about their own and others' identities and many showed a strong element of idealism, and a belief that their generation could get things better.

Areas in which greater information and clarity is required, by staff and pupils

Everyone has their own unique identity, and has an ethnicity

We found a number of cases where teachers referred to diversity and ethnicity in a way that focussed almost exclusively on minority ethnic groups and their cultures. White ethnicity, and the extent of diversities within this, was not considered. Pupils' responses also tended to give examples of the non-White when asked about diversity and identity.

Those schools that had developed a diverse curriculum were much more likely to focus on the global than the British. This has the effect of comparatively neglecting some sectors of the class, who will have regional, home country, European and world heritages that could be drawn on.

Diversity should be seen as encompassing more than simply ethnic origin. Diversity also encompasses languages, religions, regionalism, class and gender, for example. From this, teachers should be encouraged to recognise that individuals have multiple and overlapping identities, and that all pupils should be encouraged to see that they can describe themselves in these different ways. Some identities may be seen as nested, one within another (e.g. Newcastle/North East/England/British/European/Global), and that which of these is dominant may be contingent on location, circumstance and moment in time. This can be helpful in developing understanding of similarities and unities, as well as diversities. Pupils in multiethnic schools were more likely to learn about diverse groups, but they also want to learn more about British people: as one pupil said ‘we don’t learn about different people in Britain, we just learn about people with different cultures’.

Teachers may also need to be aware that the common ethnic categories, which are used, are simply convenient groupings that are found to be useful in helping identifying needs and allocating resources. New minorities are constantly developing, including mixed heritage groups and migrants from different parts of the world.

Proposals for incorporating Modern British Cultural and Social History into the Citizenship Curriculum

We were asked to ascertain the views of teachers and headteachers on the possibility of including shared British values and British identities, Modern British Cultural and Social History within a potential ‘fourth pillar’ of the citizenship curriculum. There was widespread consensus that such a move was problematic, and would require considerable discussion and debate. Any definition of ‘Britishness’ would inevitably be controversial and might well leave some pupils, both from minority ethnic groups and from some White groups, feeling that they were not fully included in the term. It was suggested that any definition would be likely to vary from school to school, and this would tend to defeat the presumed object of the initiative.

Information and understanding of different cultural groups

We found that in the case study schools there was no specific exploration of White British diversity or White British identities in the curriculum. In mainly White schools, pupils seemed less likely to have been taught about minority ethnic settlement in Britain, and of the contributions of these groups to British society. In multiethnic schools, indigenous White British pupils seemed to be less confident about identifying aspects of their White British heritage in the school curriculum and ethos. We noted that some indigenous White pupils’ experience of identity, as raised through the curriculum, left them with the feeling that their identity was in some ways a deficit or a residual identity, in comparison to their peers from minority ethnic groups.

We noted that some pupils had a strong local or regional identity, which held for them a greater significance than their national identity. Some pupils said they would welcome opportunities to learn about other British people living in Britain, who are the same as and different to them. One suggestion was that teachers ‘get students to do the opposite cultures to what they are and give presentations, so that everyone has something new to learn and can share their thoughts’. We also noted that some pupils living in predominantly White areas had experienced diversity in other parts of Britain or in other countries, and that these pupils were more likely to assert the value of diversity:

Australia changed me because it's so multicultural ... if you ever want to take a step forward you'll need to know what other people are like especially with migration between countries. I think it's a very good thing ... I don't think there can be too much of multicultural. I think the more different cultures you grow with the better. (White boy, Years 10-11, School A)

Teachers and pupils found ‘Britishness’ to be a vaguely defined term, defined by a combination of heritage, citizenship and experience. The idea of ‘shared British values’ was seen as potentially problematic, in that many other people would share the same values. There was also confusion by some pupils and teachers about the distinctions between English and British.

Pupils showed that they were aware that they should not use racist language, yet there appeared to be a disjuncture between the ‘right’ discourse on diversity and tolerance of ‘difference’ as learnt in school and some pupil’s views and experiences outside school.

Approaches that work

We noted four characteristics of school and curriculum practice that appeared to lead to good practice.

Strong and purposive leadership

Good practice, in both ethnically diverse and in largely White schools, was characterised by clear leadership by the headteacher. Typically, a clear strategy had been developed and articulated, and this was as much about *why* the policy was important and necessary as it was about *what* should be done, and how. This is not an area that can be developed simply by providing more information or more resources: teachers and schools need to understand the purposes of this approach.

Schools also need to manage staff expectations. All staff should feel that they have a sense of ownership of this element of the curriculum: all staff can use their own identity as a means of encouraging pupils to develop and express their own identities.

Planning

We found that in some schools there was a need to plan effectively, so that pupils did not repeatedly study the same groups and religions in different years, with little sense of

progression and development. While pupils in multiethnic schools were more likely to experience a diverse curriculum, some of these pupils experience of this was repetitive, and pupils said that they were bored by this curriculum.

We also found several examples of primary schools and teachers asking for greater and more explicit guidance on delivering the citizenship curriculum.

Further guidance is required by those teaching in predominantly White schools on delivering a diverse curriculum, and opportunities need to be provided in initial teacher training (ITT) and in-service training for staff to develop staff practice.

Use pupils' experiences

It is not original to suggest that effective learning draws on pupils' prior experiences, but in this area it seems to be particularly useful and apposite. It is important that schools do not underestimate the understanding/experience of pupils. The example of the pupil who had lived in multicultural Australia (above) is an example of how a pupil in a largely White school may nevertheless have had experiences that can be used in teaching the understanding and appreciation of diversity. Other pupils will have had experiences of different regions of Britain.

Teachers reported that in areas that were multiethnic it was easier to draw on pupils' experiences and heritages to deliver a diverse curriculum. But there were occasions reported by pupils when their teachers delivered idealised or stereotypical perspectives of the pupils' culture or religion, which did not accord with the culture that they or their parents actually practiced. This might be a useful area in which pupils' and parents' experiences might be used to develop a better understanding of changing contemporary cultural practices.

The presence of new minorities, including mixed heritage groups, in the schools would be another opportunity to draw on pupils' experiences.

All of the pupils we spoke with wanted to learn more about indigenous and non-indigenous British people, and very few of them said that they had experienced lessons in which they talked about things that people in Britain share.

Use pupil's idealism

In some of the groups of pupils with whom we spoke there was a notable expression of identity as being of the younger generation. Some of these pupils were critical of the racist views of their parents' generation, for example, and expressed the belief that it would be people of their own age who would make things different. This perception of generational differences in acceptance and tolerance of people from diverse ethnic groups, and in attitudes towards racism shows an optimism and idealism that might be useful in developing teaching strategies that encompass diversity and identities.

Conclusion

It is evident that in implementing a more diverse curriculum it will be necessary for schools and teachers to consider precisely what is meant by 'diversity' and how this can be achieved through the curriculum. Diversity and identities in contemporary Britain are changing and kaleidoscopic. We all have multiple identities, and one of these, for almost all of us, is some form of 'Britishness' in particular circumstances and contexts. The curriculum needs to allow pupils' to understand and appreciate diversity and its values, and that they have their own identities within this diversity. This is a sensitive and controversial area, in which teachers' need to be given firm support to develop with their pupils, from government, local authorities, school governors and headteachers. The citizenship curriculum appears to be the most appropriate place to locate this. Teaching in areas that are controversial and sensitive requires particular skills and courage: all teachers need to be trained and supported to deliver these effectively.

This research also points towards the need for teachers to develop an understanding of their own values, prejudices and attitudes towards diversity (Cline *et al.*, 2002; Garcia and Lopez, 2005; Ross, 2006) and for an appreciation of diversity as a curriculum opportunity rather than as a threat (Maylor *et al.*, 2006). Such an appreciation would help teachers to implement a diverse curriculum which situates *all* students in the centre and 'links ethnic histories' with the national culture/identity (Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist, 2004; Banks *et al.*, 2005) and encourages young people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to value and respect diversity (Bruegel and Weller, 2006), challenge racism and stereotypical attitudes, and develop a willingness to learn more about people they are like and different to:

I think it would be a really good opportunity to express ourselves to other people, so they know how you feel to be British and what it is like to come from different countries or look different, or sound different but be in this country. (White female, Year 5, School F)

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APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPING A DIVERSE CURRICULUM AND PROMOTING SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF DIVERSE GROUPS THROUGH CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

This appendix outlines examples of networks, strategies, websites and resources (identified from the literature review) that aim to develop teacher practice and support teachers in developing a culturally diverse curriculum, and preparing pupils to live in a modern multicultural Britain. Examples are also cited of resources and websites designed to promote shared understanding of citizenship in Britain.

Diversity - supporting teachers and trainee teachers

The Runnymede Trust (2003) has developed a practical guide '*Complementing Teachers*' to support teachers. The guide is designed to help schools and teachers challenge racism, promote race equality and good race relations, as well as prepare pupils in less ethnically diverse and multiethnic schools for life in a culturally diverse society. The guide aims to help teachers implement a culturally diverse curriculum and support pupils in their development of individual and cultural identities.

Similarly, the Citizenship Foundation (2003) has produced a guide entitled '*Education for Citizenship, Diversity and Race Equality*'. The guide includes a list of resources on raising awareness of cultural diversity, promoting tolerance and race equality, a list of useful websites and teaching aides.

Multiverse is a national Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Professional Resource Network funded by the Training and Development Agency (TDA) for Schools. TDA surveys of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) show that a significant number of NQTs consider that their training did not prepare them adequately to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an Additional Language. The Multiverse website (<http://www.multiverse.ac.uk>) has been developed to address these concerns, and explores achievement in relation to: social class, religious diversity, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, and Travellers and Roma. The website contains resources selected by the Multiverse Consortium (of 8 ITE institutions) to support teacher educators, student teachers and trainees in raising the educational achievement of pupils from diverse backgrounds. The resources range from ITE learning and teaching materials, research papers, government reports, latest news from the media, case studies, video clips and glossary terms. All are searchable by keywords, QTS Standards, phase, subject, key stage and author.

The TDA also funds the CitizED website (<http://www.citized.info>). Teachers (primary, secondary and post 16), teacher trainers and student teachers are the target groups for this website. CitizED aims to improve teacher knowledge of citizenship education, identify effective practices in citizenship teacher education and the content and dissemination of materials for citizenship in ITE.

Activities supporting citizenship education

'Exploring Citizenship through London's Archives, Libraries and Museums' is a directory of 32 of London's archives, libraries and museums (available at: <http://www.almlondon.org.uk>). The directory offers teachers of Key Stages 1-4 access to new archival resources which can be used to educate about citizenship sensitively and imaginatively. For example, archival sources on the history of Black and minority ethnic communities at the London Metropolitan Archives and Lambeth Archives can be used to think about diversity, racism and discrimination and developing social and moral responsibility and political literacy. The directory provides an overview of the collections held by each of the listed archives, libraries and museums and how the activities offered in each venue are linked to the National Curriculum for citizenship and other curriculum areas. The directory identifies QCA links and respective Key Stages. Also included are case studies of good practice and information regarding continuing professional development for teachers.

'Living in a Diverse World' is a scheme of work supporting citizenship education in Key Stage 2. It is part of the 'Exploring Citizenship' Programme funded by ALM London and is produced in partnership with Brent Museum, Brent Archive and Roe Green Junior school. The scheme of work has been developed for pupils to learn about their identities (similarities and differences between themselves, within their community and the world in general) and the identity of their community. The scheme also supports cross-curricular links with art, literacy, numeracy, science, geography, design technology, history and religious education. The units are specific to Brent but can be adapted to meet the needs of schools in other areas (available: <http://www.brent.gov.uk/archive>).

Oxfam's (2006) *Education for Global citizenship: A guide for schools* is designed to equip teachers with different strategies for teaching about controversial issues, enabling children to develop critical thinking in relation to controversial issues and widen their understanding of responsible global citizenship. This resource guide explores what controversial issues are, why they should be taught, why some issues are, or can become, controversial and outlines existing guidance on handling controversial issues in the classroom. The guide contains activities for use with all ages across the curriculum and can be downloaded free from

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/globciti/index.htm>

Other useful citizenship websites include: <http://www.qca.org.uk/citizenship> and <http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk>

Websites supporting Black, Asian and minority ethnic histories

<http://www.realhistories.org.uk> - is a UK wide database of resources on cultural diversity across all subject areas

Teaching resources on Black history can be accessed at:

<http://www.Blackhistory4schools.com>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/archive/histfile/mystery.htm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/archive/windrush>

The London Museums Archives and Libraries Black history resources for schools –
<http://lmal.org.uk/priorities/index.cfm?ArticleID=210&NavigationID=161>

The Institute for Race Relations Black history resources –
<http://www.irr.org.uk/history/index.html>

Teaching resources on Asian history can be accessed at:

<http://www.fathom.com/course/21701766/session1.html>

Black and Asian history can be accessed at:

The National archive, pathways to the past, Black presence: Asian and Black history in Britain 1500-1850 – <http://www.pro.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/index.htm>

The Black and Ethnic Minority experience archive – <http://www.be-me.org.body.asp>

Channel 4 Black History Map –
<http://www.channel4.com/history/microsites/B/Blackhistorymap> – a gateway to sites about Black and Asian history across the British Isles

For an understanding of the history and issues facing mixed heritage people in the UK see People in Harmony (<http://www.pih.org.uk>). People in Harmony is an interracial, antiracist organisation that promotes the positive experience of interracial life in Britain today and challenges racism, prejudice and ignorance in society.

Websites promoting an understanding of culture, diversity and identity

Britkids <http://www.britkid.org/> - for lower secondary pupils in mainly White areas

BBC - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/londonlive> – London focus but applicable to whole of Britain

Islam and British Muslims – IQRA Trust at <http://www.iqratrust.org.uk>

Muslim Council of Britain – <http://www.mcb.org.uk>

Addressing racist behaviour in schools

The Antiracist Toolkit – <http://www.antiracisttoolkit.org.uk>

Race equality – CRE guidance on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 –
<http://www.cre.gov.uk/>

Dadzie (2001) has also produced a *'Toolkit for Tackling Racism in School'* (Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books).

APPENDIX B: KEY POLICIES/DEBATES ABOUT COMMON BRITISH IDENTITIES AND CITIZENSHIP

This appendix draws on academic, government, media and ‘grey’ literature to discuss existing reviews, documents, policies and legislation implemented by the government and others in relation to promoting British identities and citizenship, and the public reaction to them. This review concentrates especially on the last 12 months, from the reactions to the July 7th attacks in 2005 up until the end of August 2006. Throughout the year ‘Britishness’ and national identity has been a constant feature of popular debate, both in reaction to events such as the July 7th attacks, and in relation to government policy and MP speeches on this topic.

Introduction: Government initiatives setting ‘Britishness’ on the Agenda

Since it came to power in 1997, the government has set debates concerning ‘Britishness’ and the make-up of national identity as one of the key items on its agenda. These have included speeches aiming to define intrinsic values of ‘Britishness’, for example ‘tolerance’, ‘fair play’ and ‘love of the rule of law’ (see Gordon Brown and Mike O’Brien’s speech reported in Alibhai Brown, 1999:1-7) – values that Bhavnani *et al.*, (2005) argues were constructed and popularised back in the days of Empire. They have also included attempts to try and redefine ‘Britishness’ in order to make it more ‘inclusive’ of minority ethnic cultures, for example Robin Cook’s description of chicken tikka masala as a national dish (The Guardian, 19/4/2001). This has coincided with debates by journalists, think-tanks and non-governmental organisations both for and against the concept of multiculturalism as an ideology underpinning national identity. For example, whilst the Parekh Report, commissioned by the Runnymede Trust, argued for the development of a plural society based on a ‘community of communities’ (Parekh, 2000a), Trevor Phillips of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) called for a re-appraisal of multiculturalism from the left, arguing that it encouraged conceptions of the ‘separateness’ of communities (Trevor Phillips, The Observer, 4/4/2004). However, his call for reasserting ‘common values’ such as ‘honouring the culture of these islands, like Shakespeare and Dickens’ (ibid.) have been criticised by others from the left as being exclusionary: ‘the common values of Shakespeare and Dickens evoke white, middle class men’s ‘cultures’ rather than, for example, the antislavery movement, the influence of Salman Rushdie, Mary Seacole or Sylvia Pankhurst’ (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2005:46). Lewis (2000), Bhavnani *et al.*, (2005) and others have warned that such moves against multiculturalism simply perpetuate the conflation of ‘national identity’ with that of the dominant majority, promoting a narrow ‘assimilationist’ notion of ‘Britishness’. It is in this context of the continuing discussions around ‘Britishness’ and multiculturalism that this review of the past year’s debates is set.

Reaction to the July 7th 2005 attacks

The July 7th terrorist attacks in London triggered a fresh wave of debate concerning ‘Britishness’ and the perceived threat to ‘British life’ from ‘outsiders’. From the right,

commentators such as Michael Portillo criticised what he perceived as the ‘deficiencies’ of multiculturalism in its call to equally respect all cultures:

Tolerance was clearly never meant to mean that Britain should allow those with roots outside the country to flout human rights and the laws of the land on the pretext that things were done differently where they came from. The Ayn Rand Institute is right to say that it is dangerous nonsense to pretend that all cultures are morally equivalent. Such sloppy thinking corrodes our ability to distinguish good from evil. (Michael Portillo, Sunday Times, 17/7/05)

In this quotation Portillo asserts the moral superiority of ‘British’ culture (with its often popularly asserted quality of ‘tolerance’) over the cultures of ‘those with roots outside the country’ – seen as separate to the ‘British’. Despite his statement further in this article that the ‘tolerant’ British people (i.e. the ‘White’ Christian majority) would not equate Muslims with terrorists and terrorist sympathisers, his rhetoric appears to equate the two, positioning *both* as outside a mono-ethnic ‘tolerant’ White British culture, to which Muslims must be ‘assimilated’ into in order to successfully be ‘British’. Similar arguments on the need to promote a unitary British identity rather than too much ‘attachment to other traditions’ were put forward by Michael Howard (Guardian, 17/8/05).

Other commentators, whilst not arguing for the cultural ‘assimilation’ of minority ethnic groups into a mono-ethnic Britain, nevertheless still asserted that multiculturalism had been taken ‘too far’. Interestingly, Portillo used as support to his argument comments made in 2004 by Trevor Phillips (see above), on the need to move away from the ideals of multiculturalism in order to ‘assert a core of ‘Britishness’’ (Sunday Times, 17/7/05). The Times Leader of November 1st, 2005 also stated that ‘a misunderstood multiculturalism has led to social and cultural fragmentation at the expense of a common core’.

Such calls were noted with concern from many left-of-centre commentators:

Britain is in this vulnerable position, runs the argument, because it has been too liberal across the board - from allowing asylum seekers from Somalia and Eritrea to carelessness about non-English speaking imams spreading jihad in British mosques. On that bridgehead of shared concern, it's not hard to take the conservative argument further; Britain is too polyglot, access to its generous welfare state is too easy and there's been too much concern for tolerance, observance of human rights and concern for the underdog. And this speaks to a so far unspoken but just below the surface sentiment; Enoch Powell's warning that the streets would one day run with blood has been proved right. Britishness must be recast around conservative values and the same mistake not made again. (Will Hutton, The Observer, 31/7/2005)

Hutton and others from the centre left argued instead that such calls would not succeed because Britain is not, and never has been, a mono-ethnic society. In the same article

Hutton argues that ‘Britishness’ is a wide, flexible concept that can also welcome those with simultaneous ‘emotional’ identities to other ethnicities:

[‘Britishness’ is] a political jurisdiction that has common practical mores while allowing our emotional identity to be rooted in one of the tribes from which the country has been constituted over time - English, Welsh, Scottish, Jews - and for immigrants, India, Nigeria or Barbados. Even if we want to make Britishness more assertive and conservative or even to harden it into a citizenship test, it won’t wash. ...[‘Britishness’] encompasses multiple traditions, stories, tribes and eccentricities; belonging means little more than speaking the language, recognising the complexities and achievements while acknowledging the minimal rules that flow from the political arrangements. The tolerance is in the DNA. (Will Hutton, *The Observer*, 31/7/2005)

Interestingly, in this passage, whilst Hutton argues for a more flexible, encompassing British identity, he nevertheless instils the notion of such a national identity as in some way possessing ‘essential’ ‘natural’ qualities such as tolerance that lie ‘in the DNA’. The conception that ‘Britishness’ exists as an entity that can somehow be pinned down and defined remains.

The introduction of ‘Britishness tests’

In November 2005 the government announced proposals for a new ‘Britishness test’ that all applicants for UK citizenship would need to pass before becoming British citizens. Questions would be drawn from a handbook entitled ‘Life in the UK’ and would test potential citizens on their knowledge of aspects of British life such as legal institutions and processes, and practical knowledge such as emergency services numbers. Home Office Minister Tony McNulty stated:

We must develop a society in which new citizens feel welcome and where there is a clear understanding of the expectations of all residents, new and old. The measures will help new citizens to gain a greater appreciation of the civic and political dimension of British citizenship. (Tony McNulty, *The Mirror*, 1/11/2005)

News of the tests brought criticism from a variety of quarters. Trevor Phillips, chair of the CRE, stated that many of the questions would not be able to be answered by many current British citizens, and were thus unfair and discriminatory (*The Mirror*, 1/11/2005). Others such as the Shadow Home Secretary, David Davis, complained of the lack of historical questions: ‘Understanding Britain’s history is crucial to understanding how our country works in practice today’ (*The Mirror*, 1/11/2005).

Gordon Brown’s speech on ‘Britishness’ and the call for a national celebration day

Gordon Brown’s speech at a Fabian Society conference on ‘The Future of Britishness’ on January 14th 2006 was debated in the media for the rest of the year. One of Brown’s key proposals was a national day for the celebration of British national culture and heritage.

‘What is our Fourth of July? What is our Independence Day? Where is our declaration of rights? What is our equivalent of a flag day in every garden?’ (Gordon Brown, *The Independent*, 14/1/2006).

In an attack on calls from the right for a mono-ethnic, assimilationist sense of British identity, Brown argued:

Take the most recent illustration of what challenges us to be more explicit about Britishness: the debate about asylum and immigration and about multiculturalism and inclusion, issues that are particularly potent because in a fast-changing world people who are insecure need to be rooted. Here the question is whether our national identity is defined by values we share in common or just by race and ethnicity - a definition that would leave our country at risk of relapsing into a wrongheaded ‘cricket test’ of loyalty [referring to Norman Tebbit’s famous remark that unless people of all ethnic groups supported England in cricket when they were playing opponents of their own ethnic origin/identity, they were not ‘truly’ British]. (Gordon Brown, *The Independent*, 16/1/2006)

Brown called for the ‘reclamation’ of the Union flag from its extreme right-wing connotations, and again brought up the concept of ‘tolerance’ as a national characteristic when he asserted that the flag should be a symbol ‘for tolerance and inclusion’ (Gordon Brown, *The Independent*, 14/1/2006). Also, unlike the previous proposals drawn up for ‘Britishness tests’, he stressed the importance of history in defining British national identity – in Brown’s view, a construction of British history that emphasised aspects such as the Magna Carta in 1215, the Bill of Rights in 1689, and ‘standing up against fascism’ in the 1940’s (*The Sunday Times*, 15/1/2006). In reaction against right-wing constructions of British national history, Brown argued that the values on which ‘Britishness’ are based ‘owe more to progressive ideas than to right-wing ones’ (*The Sunday Times*, 15/1/2006). The Chair of the CRE, Trevor Phillips, supported Brown’s proposition, stating that it was important to ‘celebrate the things all British people have in common’ and ‘to go into battle to claim back the issue of ‘Britishness’ from the far right’. However, he did not back the possible choice of Remembrance Sunday as a date for the holiday, because that would be too ‘backward-looking’ (*The Observer*, 15/1/2006). Later in the year, a public opinion poll found the majority of voters in favour of June 15, the date of the signing of the Magna Carta, as the best date to celebrate ‘Britishness’. (*The Times*, 13/6/2006)

Commentators from the right critiqued the concept of ‘Britishness’ as bound up in progressive values. The *Sunday Times* leader for 15th January 2006 argued ‘many of this government’s actions are profoundly un-British, from its failure to address the West Lothian question to its championing until recently of multiculturalism’ – again equating ‘Britishness’ with a mono-ethnic ‘White’ majority culture. From the left, some writers questioned the defining of ‘Britishness’ as the virtues of ‘tolerance and inclusion’ when firstly, such virtues are international rather than the specific qualities of an individual country, and secondly, ‘nor have they always been on display across Britain’s long

history' (Tristram Hunt, *The Observer*, 15/1/2006). Still others questioned the rather 'un-Britishness' of such a celebration:

Certainly, there is a rich tradition of tolerance, liberalism and pragmatism to celebrate in this country. These are characteristics that have allowed us to create a successfully multicultural society. But these qualities go along with self-deprecation, suspicion of excessive zeal and a preference for understatement. We do irony better than we do bombast. (Leader, *Observer* 15/1/2006)

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown in the *Independent* expressed a more radical statement about inclusive British identity, recognising that all identities are socially constructed:

When the bombs blasted across London, as Muslim immigrants we felt our own hearts were being blown apart. This land has given us space to be what we want to be and most of us would not leave in spite of racism and the constant fight to be accepted as legitimate citizens. I love this capital, its seething soul, its unpredictability and confidence, the language, changing internal and external landscapes, and eccentricities, incredible arts and robust political debates. I have been offered jobs in both Canada and the US but here is where I want to live and die. But not if they start pushing flags and the Royal Family at me [...]

There is a modern British identity we must strive to make, although much of it will happen in any event and cannot be [explicitly] invented [...] Most of all, our institutions should become places where real equality prevails and where a new imagined Britain begins to reveal itself. (Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, *The Independent*, 16/1/2006)

The 'Home Nations' and 'Britishness'

The concept of 'Britishness' was not only hotly debated in 2005-6 in relation to minority ethnic groups and new applicant citizens, but also in relation to the 'home nations' of the UK. In a conference in London on 'The Value of Britishness' on November 28th 2005, First Minister Jack McConnell stated that leaders in politics and the media must take care not to conflate English views or needs with those of Britain as a whole. Arguing for the valuing of diversity within an 'umbrella' conception of 'Britishness' as a national identity, he stated:

There is danger in trying to develop a single notion of Britishness. If we are to agree that Britishness is anything, then it can only ever be a definition of diversity ... Say England when you mean it, and say Britain when we are talking about the whole country. It means accepting that different problems need different solutions, different people may have different priorities, and different identities – ethnic and national – need recognition. (Jack McConnell, *The Times*, 29/11/2005)

In response to Brown's speech to the Fabian conference on a National 'Britishness' day, a number of commentators in the media debated the importance of 'Britishness' to members of the UK in comparison with national identities of Englishness, Scottishness

and Welshness. Alex Salmon of the Scottish National Party argued that the concept of ‘Britishness’ ‘went bust a long time ago’. (Independent on Sunday, 15/1/2006)

Writers such as Tristram Hunt pointed out that ‘Britishness’ is a relatively recent construct, born of the Act of Union in the eighteenth century:

Great Britain cannot be regarded as an ancient nation whose origins are lost in the mists of time. Instead, it should be regarded as the specific construct of the Act of Union between England and Scotland ... The very forces which first crafted Great Britain in the 1700s are now in disarray. The ambition for Empire is gone; Protestantism in its Anglican and nonconformist varieties is a shadow of its previous magnificence; and while the Prime Minister has done all he can to keep our martial spirit up, we are no longer involved in the kind of totalising military mobilisations of which the Second World War was the last. (Tristram Hunt, The Observer, 15/1/2006)

Hunt instead noted with enthusiasm the rising interest in ‘home nation’ identities, including a ‘progressive’ multi-ethnic concept of English identity:

In the Nineties, English nationalism witnessed a wholly unexpected grassroots revival. On the left, the likes of Billy Bragg and Tony Benn championed the radical heritage of the English common man ... if it is managed well, what [‘progressive’ initiatives] could help the public realise is the long-established multicultural component of English identity. For one of the most popular English icons - the cup of tea - is a microcosm of our imperial, global history of power politics and cultural exchange. (Tristram Hunt, The Observer, 15/1/2006)

The call by Hunt and others for the promotion of a multi-ethnic *English* rather than British identity is interesting – however, it seems to be based on a conception that the ‘English’ ‘Scottish’ and ‘Welsh’ national identities are somehow more ‘authentic’ and ‘real’ than British identities, whereas in fact they are just as socially constructed.

A year on from the July 7th attacks – the debates continue

Timothy Garton Ash in the Guardian stressed the continuing importance, a year after the July 2005 attacks, of trying to understand why many young British Muslims still feel alienated from British Society. Rather than locating the problem within Muslim ‘culture’ itself (as a dangerous entity ‘alien’ to ‘true’ ‘Britishness’) he cites what he sees as mistakes in Britain’s foreign policy in relation to Iraq, Afghanistan and recently the Lebanon as a major source of the problem (Timothy Garton Ash, The Guardian, 10/8/2006). Magnus Linklater in the Times also warned against locating the problem as lying within Britain’s multi-ethnic make-up, as critics of British cultural diversity have asserted (most recently the newsreader George Alagiah, who described diversity and fundamentalism as having developed hand in hand) (The Times, 23/8/2006). Linklater countered such arguments:

I am beginning to find the argument against multiculturalism tendentious – it plays too easily to the bias of racism, and it is manna for the British National Party; radicalised Muslims are not, by and large, immigrants – they are born and raised in Britain, their extremism owing more to events abroad than diversity in this country. (The Times, 23/8/2006)

However, in launching the Government's most recent initiative in relation to 'Britishness' and diversity, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly stated that foreign policy was not a 'root cause' of extremism. She also placed a question mark on the issue of multiculturalism, stating that the UK had moved away from a 'uniform consensus' about the issue, and that there were concerns that multiculturalism had encouraged 'separateness':

Multiculturalism, different communities in Britain, the fact that Britain is open to people of all faiths and none, has been a huge strength of this country. But what we have got to do is recognise that while there have been huge benefits, there are also tensions created. The point of the Commission ... is to try and examine how those tensions arise and what local communities can do on the ground practically to tackle those and make a difference. (Ruth Kelly, BBC News Online, 24/8/06)

Whilst the Commission's launch was cautiously welcomed both by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, Operation Black Vote expressed dismay at what they perceived as a new attack on multiculturalism, and stated that The Commission needed to delve deeply into the underlying issues of continuing social inequality, discrimination and racism experienced by many Black and minority ethnic communities, which they posited were the greatest barriers to community cohesion. (BBC News Online, 24/8/06)

The debates continue, and it remains to be seen what path popular constructions of British identity will take:

Britain confronts a historic choice as to its future direction. Will it try to turn the clock back, digging in, defending old values and ancient hierarchies, relying on a narrow English-dominated, backward-looking definition of the nation? Or will it seize the opportunity to create a more flexible, inclusive, cosmopolitan image of itself? Britain is at a turning point. But it has not yet turned the corner. It is time to make the move. (Parekh, 2000a:15)

Appendix Summary

Throughout the year 'Britishness' and national identity has been a constant feature of popular debate, both in reaction to events such as the July 7th attacks, and in relation to government policy and MP speeches on this topic. The debates have increasingly centred on the value and viability of the ideology of multiculturalism, from the centre-left as well as the right. Reactions to the July 7th 2005 attacks in the UK included 'assimilationist' pronouncements by right-wing commentators. Reactions also included concerns from Trevor Phillips of the CRE that multiculturalism had 'gone too far' and engendered a sense of 'separateness' between ethnic groups. However, the 'common core' of

‘Britishness’ which he argues should be promoted is met with concern by those on the left who see it as too class-specific and White anglocentric.

Similar arguments surround the government’s plans for ‘citizenship tests’, and also Gordon Brown’s speech to the Fabian Society in January 2006, in which he attacks calls from the right for a mono-ethnic assimilationist conception of national identity and argues that progressive rather than conservative values have shaped British history and identity. Critics from the left problematise the notion that British history can be simply equated with progressive ideals, whilst others argue that all forms of identity are socially constructed and changing, the ‘essences’ of identity therefore cannot be defined, and shouldn’t be ‘forced’ on others.

‘Britishness’ is also hotly debated in relation to ‘home nation’ identities, seen as ‘more authentic’ by some due to their longer history. Attempts are made by progressive commentators to define a multi-ethnic English identity – however, this is also unproblematically seen in ‘essentialist’ terms. A year on from the July 7th attacks and the debates fiercely continue – centred around continuing divergent opinions as to the value and viability of multiculturalism.

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