

‘Open Consultation on Proposed New Independent School Standards’

*A Response by the Maranatha Community
to the above Consultation
issued by the
Department for Education*

August 2014

RESPONSE

*This Response, by the Maranatha Community, addresses Part 2 of the consultation, namely the ‘**Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students – with the aim of making the active promotion of British values in schools mandatory**’.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The British values which have been fundamental to our national history, which have shaped the institutions of our national infrastructure and to which the vast majority of British people would wish our national culture to adhere, are founded upon Judaeo-Christian belief and practice and can be directly related to specific Biblical teaching.

In the preparation of material for the teaching of British values, it is important to recognise that the values which have defined British culture in the past, have been eroded over the last 50 years in our national life.

As the Judaeo-Christian foundations of our nation have been systematically undermined, the fruit has been seen in the emergence of increasing self-centredness, dishonesty and amorality.

The discovery, by those immigrating to Britain, of what is now our sexualised, celebrity-focused and scandal-ridden society, is both shocking and abhorrent, as is the disenchantment, purposelessness and threat of lawlessness among the young.

The decline in standards in our public life, together with the abandonment of what has hitherto been globally recognised as British values, is a significant factor in the reaction of those of other faith communities, who still regard Britain as a ‘Christian country’. This is particularly the case within Muslim communities and especially among the minority dedicated to the Islamisation of Britain.

The majority of British youth – from all backgrounds of faith or none – do not now have a strong sense of identity and feel disconnected from our mainstream national life. They are also confused by the hugely mixed messages projected by older generations in the public life of this nation.

Education cannot teach identity and the promotion of values in schools will be meaningless unless the underlying confusion in society is addressed. Identity and values are first learned within the family – the basic building block of society. Immigrant families and communities, even to second and third generations, in this nation are, in the main, strong and usually retain a clear sense of their national identity and culture. This is in contrast to the increasing trend in British society of family breakdown and community disintegration.

In order for schools to embrace the 'spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students', a decision must be made about the moral and spiritual leadership of our nation. In the past this has been the role of the Church of England. However, Christian influence has been undermined and rejected over the past half century as the spiritual dimension of life has been deliberately privatised in favour of a Secular Humanist agenda.

The promotion of British values will be fruitless unless there is first a clear definition of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural basis from which they are drawn. The promotion of this must happen not only in schools but throughout our national life, within its structures and practice.

2. BRITISH VALUES

The central value which has dominated British history and culture is that **every person – man, woman and child – is of infinite and equal worth** because each one is made in the image of God. As such, **life itself is of the utmost value and every person – man, woman and child – is entitled to absolute respect from every other human being.**

This central value leads to the establishment of right relationships between individuals, families and communities. **Right relationships are fundamental to a healthy society, characterised by stability, prosperity and peace for all.**

Values are first learned and given substance within the family and, until recently, have been given substance by being passed from one generation to the next. Therefore, British values should be taught and embraced by all families as well as within our education system.

Personal values are integral to the outworking of community and national values. In Britain, personal values should include **honesty, truthfulness and integrity**, which generate an attitude of **diligence, steadfastness and personal accountability**. These should be accompanied by **courtesy, modesty and self-restraint**.

Individual rights should be accompanied by a clear sense and commitment to corporate responsibility.

British national values, defined in the 'Prevent Strategy 2011' include "democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs".

In addition to the values defined above, British values should include **respect for the rule of law and equality of all before the law**. Individual liberty must embrace **freedom of speech, debate, conscience and religion**. Mutual respect, as practised in this nation, includes **respect for the property of others, compassion, care and protection for the vulnerable** and a **readiness to help those in need**. British history demonstrates that, as a

nation, we have not only tolerated those of different faiths and beliefs, but have welcomed and embraced them, with a **particular care for those in need of refuge**.

The British value of democracy is not derived from legislation for all situations but rather is that which originates in Judaeo-Christian belief and practice, which is the basis for a **free and open society**. In the past this has generated an attitude of being prepared to **sacrifice self-interest for the sake of others and for the common good**. This ranges from taking one's turn in a queue to being prepared to lay down one's life for our nation and for the sake of what is just.

3. CONCLUSION

- (i) In the plural society that Britain now is, there needs to be a singular underlying and overarching spiritual and moral compass. Only an infrastructure based on Judaeo-Christian principles will accommodate those of all beliefs and none, with equality and freedom for all people. This has been evident throughout British history and should now be clearly reaffirmed.
- (ii) The admired and desirable values, which have been the hallmark of British society in the past, are all rooted in Judaeo-Christian belief, teaching and practice. It is not possible to have the fruit without maintenance of the roots.
- (iii) Secularism is not a spiritually neutral position. It positively discriminates against people and communities of faith. Values emerging from this ideology depend upon a legalistic political correctness, denying the 'spirit' of the law as we have known it. It will not subdue the radicalisation of those committed to Islam but will in fact increase it.

The Maranatha Community
102 Irlam Road, Flixton, Manchester M41 6JT
Tel: 0161 748 4858 Fax: 0161 747 7379
E-mail: info@maranathacommunity.org.uk
www.maranathacommunity.org.uk

*The Maranatha Community is an international movement of thousands of Christians who are active in all the main denominations throughout the United Kingdom.
It is particularly concerned for the welfare of children and young people.*