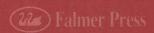# Values in Education
and
Education in Values

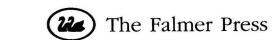J. Mark Halstead & Monica J. Taylor (Editors)

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Values in Education and Education in Values

Edited by

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Preface

The major purpose of this volume is to set out some of the key issues and debates relating to the importance of values in education and of education in values, and to stimulate discussion and reflection among teachers, administrators, researchers and educational policymakers.

The volume has a twofold structure, one formal the other informal. At a formal level, the structure falls in two parts. After an introductory chapter about the concept of values and values education, Part I provides a variety of perspectives on the values that underpin contemporary education: in theory and practice, from the point of view of the government and the school, and from the perspective of the growing diversity of modern society. Chapter 2 argues that education in western democratic societies is invariably grounded on the fundamental liberal values of freedom, equality and rationality. In Chapters 3 to 8, six groups of values are identified – spiritual, moral, environmental, democratic, and those of the arts and of health education – and the meaning and importance of these values for education is discussed. Chapter 9 examines the values behind government education policy and compares these to the goal of educating the whole person. These chapters are by no means based on a common ideology (nor are they necessarily a reflection of the editors' own views), but their very diversity is designed to challenge taken-for-granted views, to offer new insights and to encourage further discussion.

Part II focuses on school practice. The chapters examine a variety of ways in which values may be incorporated into the activities of schools, and aim to encourage further reflection on the processes of values education. Chapter 10 examines pupils' values in the light of their experiences at school. Chapter 11 suggests ways in which schools can develop a clear vision of their goals. Chapter 12 examines school mission statements and the influence of these on parents' choice of schools. Chapter 13 considers whole school issues and ways of approaching values education within the school curriculum. Chapter 14 draws on the author's own experience as a recent headteacher of a multiethnic inner-city school and describes the link between values education and the school's ethos and structures. Finally, Chapter 15 examines the ethical implications of assessing children's personal development.

Alongside this formal structure is an undercurrent of debates about values and education which surface from time to time throughout the book. These

include the meaning and nature of values; the concept of education; the impact of social change and cultural diversity; the relationship between religion and values; children's developing understanding of values; the role of the teacher; and the inspection of values education.

The book has its origins in a conference on Spiritual and Moral Education held at the University of Plymouth in September 1993. Four of the chapters – those by John Hull, Andrew Marfleet, Ruth Merttens and Jasper Ungoed-Thomas – are revised versions of the papers they presented at that conference. The remaining chapters have been written especially for this volume.

In addition to the authors of individual chapters, there are many others who have contributed indirectly to this volume, both through conversations and discussions and through practical and moral encouragement during the pressures of writing. Our thanks are due to them all.

J. Mark Halstead
Monica J. Taylor

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Chapter 1

Values and Values Education in Schools

J. Mark Halstead

ABSTRACT: *The first half of this chapter examines the concept of values in an educational context, and the difficulty in a pluralist society of finding a framework of shared values to underpin the work of the school. The second half focuses on the concept of values education and by reference to practice in both Europe and North America explores current debates and dilemmas. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the inspection of values education.*

Values are central to both the theory of education and the practical activities of schools in two ways. First, schools and individual teachers within schools are a major influence, alongside the family, the media and the peer group, on the developing values of children and young people, and thus of society at large. Secondly, schools reflect and embody the values of society; indeed, they owe their existence to the fact that society values education and seeks to exert influence on the pattern of its own future development through education. However, the values of society are not as uniform or unchanging as this suggests. Many groups within society have a legitimate claim to a stake in the educational process – parents, employers, politicians, local communities, leaders of industry and taxpayers, as well as teachers and children themselves – and within each of these groups there is a wide diversity of political, social, economic, religious, ideological and cultural values. The expectations of interested parties are thus often in conflict, and schools sometimes become the battleground where groups with different value priorities vie for influence and domination.

The part schools play in the teaching of values and the part values play in the organization of schools are closely connected. The values of schools are apparent in their organization, curriculum and discipline procedures, as well as in the relationships between teachers and pupils. Values are reflected in what teachers choose to permit or encourage in the classroom and in the way they respond to children's contributions to learning, and children learn values from such responses. Even the seating arrangements in a classroom convey certain values. When teachers insist on precision and accuracy in children's

work, or praise their use of imagination, or censure racist or sexist language, or encourage them to show initiative, or respond with interest, patience or frustration to their ideas, children are being introduced to values and value-laden issues (cf. Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen, 1993).

Frequently the values of the school are not fully explored or articulated. This may be simply because the values are hard to analyze, since they are deeply embedded in teachers' taken-for-granted world view; or because teachers are often not well prepared in their initial training for reflection on values; or else because teachers have to make so many day-to-day decisions at a classroom level that they tend to rely on what may be termed a moral instinct. Even where a school has produced a values statement, this is not the end of the matter. For example, if a policy statement says 'all pupils are entitled to be treated with respect by staff' (see Chapter 14), there needs to be a shared understanding of what is meant by 'being treated with respect'. In addition, there is likely to be a considerable difference between the values a school proclaims and those which in fact underpin its practice (see Taylor, 1994a, 29). Many values, however, are left within the domain of the hidden curriculum. Where there is no systematic discussion of values and value issues in the classroom, children may be more likely to develop values haphazardly, and indeed it is not uncommon for the values which pupils develop in school to be different from those the school intends. Partly this may be a reflection of the critical perspective the school seeks to develop through the curriculum, and partly it may result from a lack of congruence and coherence in value implementation.

These factors suggest a need for schools to reflect on and voice their values with greater precision (McLaughlin, 1995). This need is made the more pressing by four further considerations:

- growing cultural diversity (and therefore diversity of values) within all western societies;
- a growing gulf between the values of government and teachers (see Chapters 2 and 9 in this volume), which has led to a breakdown of trust and to stronger demands for accountability (Halstead, 1994);
- the perceived 'moral decline' not only among young people but also in public life;
- the determination of government to uphold certain values, for example, by subjecting the contribution of schools to the spiritual and moral development of children to regular inspection.

Any examination of the links between values and education brings to light a number of the key questions. Several of these are touched on in this chapter and others surface from time to time throughout the book.

- Is there a distinction to be made between private and public values?

- Do particular values (whether political, aesthetic, moral or religious) have validity only within particular cultures or traditions?
- Are there overarching principles by which conflicts between values may be resolved?
- Is there a sufficient basis of shared values in our society to support a common framework of education for all children, or should parents be free to choose between schools with different sets of values?
- Do the values which are currently taught in schools necessarily reinforce (intentionally or otherwise) the privileged position of certain social classes or religious or cultural groups?
- Are there any absolute values, or merely changing and relative ones?
- Should schools reflect *traditional* values or seek to transform these?
- Should schools instil values in pupils or teach them to explore and develop their own values?
- Should teachers aim for a neutral (or value-free) approach to their subject matter?

Before any of these questions can be considered, however, the first step is to examine more closely what is meant by the term *values*.

What are Values?

Although several surveys of moral and social values in Britain and Europe have been carried out over the last fifteen years (Abrams *et al.*, 1985; Barker *et al.*, 1992), there is still much disagreement about the term 'values'. Values have been variously defined as things which are considered 'good' in themselves (such as beauty, truth, love, honesty and loyalty) and as personal or social preferences. Raths, Harmin and Simon (1966, 28) describe values as 'beliefs, attitudes or feelings that an individual is proud of, is willing to publicly affirm, has [sic] been chosen thoughtfully from alternatives without persuasion, and is [sic] acted on repeatedly'. Fraenkel (1977, 11) considers values as being 'both emotional commitments and ideas about worth'. Beck (1990, 2) defines values as 'those things (objects, activities, experiences, etc.) which on balance promote human wellbeing'. Further definitions are suggested by several of the contributors to the present volume (see in particular Chapters 4 and 6). In the present chapter, however, the term *values* is used to refer to *principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as points of reference in decision-making or the evaluation of beliefs or action and which are closely connected to personal integrity and personal identity.*

This definition is open to criticism on the grounds that it fails to differentiate quite distinct things like virtues, convictions and commitments and that it treats values as a kind of possession, something which people have. It is true that to talk of the *value* of something (as in the phrase *value-added*) has

always been to talk of its worth, and that when we *value* something we are making a high estimate of its worth. However, the term *values* (in the plural) now seems to be used to refer to the criteria by which we make such value judgments, to the principles on which the value judgments are based. Thus Shaver and Strong say

> Values are our standards and principles for judging worth. They are the criteria by which we judge 'things' (people, objects, ideas, actions and situations) to be good, worthwhile, desirable; or, on the other hand, bad, worthless, despicable (1976, 15).

This raises the question of whether the values by which we judge worth are subjective or objective, relative or absolute. An initial distinction must be made between merely personal value judgments or preferences (for example, 'I prefer heavy metal to country-and-western') and 'true' judgments of value, which purport to have a more rational character (for example, 'that was a kind act'). But this is not enough. For even within the latter group, it is possible to distinguish a number of different points on a continuum:

- At one extreme is the view of values as a set of subjective criteria for making judgments. This may be linked to a relativist view that no set of values can be shown to be better than another. The roots of this view may lie in the strong sense of individualism in western societies, or more specifically if unconsciously in the logical positivist position that value judgments are merely expressions of personal opinion since they are not open to verification through observation and experiment. This view has sometimes been claimed to provide a useful way of resolving disputes over values in culturally plural societies: 'you have your values and I have mine.'
- At the other end of the continuum is the view of values as absolute, that is, as applying everywhere and at all times. On this view, certain human actions are always right or always wrong, irrespective of circumstance.
- Somewhere in between is the view that certain values, such as animal rights, patriotism, equal opportunities or bravery, have some kind of objective quality, insofar as 'some social arrangements and patterns of behaviour promote well being more than others' (Beck, 1990, 3). These values may therefore be explored in a systematic and objective fashion, though it is also recognized that they are socially constructed and may vary over time and from one group or society to another.

Values in a Pluralist Society

In a monocultural society, the middle view as set out in the last paragraph offers a clear basis for values education. Children will be introduced to the

values and practices of their own society as objective reality. In a pluralist society, however, such an approach is not possible, since not everyone shares the same values (or even shares the same understanding of what values are; cf. Haydon, 1995, 56). Yet without shared values it is impossible to find a basis for the establishment of common institutions in society. Clearly there could be no society at all without a minimum set of common values and standards of behaviour. These are likely to include, first, a basic social morality (in particular, a respect for justice and a recognition that other groups have as much right as one's own to avoid physical pain and death among their members); second, the acceptance of a common system of law and government by all groups within the broader society (though the systems need not be the same for all 'broader societies') and a commitment to seek to change these only through democratic means; and third, a commitment to values presupposed by the pluralist ideal (in particular, the toleration of groups with different ideals to one's own and the rejection of violence as a means of persuasion). Haydon expands this third category by arguing that citizenship within a plural society requires that everyone should be taught not only about morality but also 'about the plurality, not merely of values, but of the kinds of significance attached to values' (1995, 54).

However, the minimum framework of common values remains a very *thin* one (cf. White, 1987, 16), certainly not sufficient to support a common system of education as extensive as we have today. If the common school is to be retained, it is widely assumed that some way must be found of making this minimum framework of values more substantial. But how? There is no shortage of possible answers. In the past it has tended to be the values of the dominant group that have filled the vacuum, and it has frequently been claimed that schools have promoted middle-class values (Rich, 1993:164f). In conservative circles, the traditional values of religion, the family and the national heritage have found favour; the ill-fated slogan 'back to basics' also represented an emphasis on *standards*, whether moral, social or academic. Liberals may look to those values which can be rationally justified as universally appropriate (see Chapter 2), or may suggest that an expansion of the minimum framework of common values may be negotiated democratically (cf. Haydon, 1987). However, in a pluralist society, there will be suspicion of all these approaches among some minority groups. Even democratic negotiation presupposes certain shared values and shared goals (such as valuing a democratic form of life), which may not, in fact, be shared by all and may even be perceived as a threat to the traditional way of life of some groups (cf. Halstead, 1988: Ch. 8).

The introduction of market forces into educational provision, as Elliott (1994:415ff) points out, 'enables a pragmatic solution to the problem of value pluralism to be effected'. The market, he suggests, provides the context for the negotiation of values between providers and customers. In order to thrive, the school cannot uphold values which diverge significantly from those of the community it serves. If this approach is accepted, it implies that in a plural

society there will be a diversity of provision, with different schools reflecting not only different curricular emphases but also different cultural or ideological values (cf. Hargreaves, 1994). This is a view which some minority goups, including Muslims, Jews, evangelical Christians and others, have been putting forward for some time (Halstead, 1995). However, it undermines the principle of the common school, which among other things seeks to show equal respect to a diversity of cultural values and promote mutual tolerance and understanding.

The task, which schools and other educational institutions are now facing, of discussing and clarifying their values and making them public is thus enormously complex. It would be a serious mistake to view it as a matter of dreaming up a list of values or opting for a prepackaged set (for example, those suggested by the National Curriculum Council, 1993). Schools must pay attention to the diversity of values in the communities they serve (which are themselves in flux) as well as in society at large, and to the legitimate expectations of interested parties. They must examine their aims and their curriculum provision and practices to see what values lie embedded there and must reflect on the justifiability, appropriateness and coherence of these values. In the end, the statements of value that emerge may be ambiguous, provisional and less than totally clear (cf. McLaughlin, 1994:459). But unless schools make the effort to articulate their values and develop some clarity of vision, they will not be in a strong position to pursue their task of developing pupils' understanding of values and helping pupils to develop their own commitments. It is to this latter task that we must now turn.

Values Education: Principles and Practice

The term *values education* has a much shorter history in England and Wales than it has it North America, or even in Scotland. Nevertheless, a recent directory of research and resources in values education in the UK lists 113 entries, made up of research projects, organizations, publications and other initiatives (Taylor, 1994b). The establishment of the Values Education Council in the UK in 1995 may prove an important turning point; it aims to bring together organizations with a shared interest in values education, its purpose being 'the promotion and development of values in the context of education as a lifelong process, to help individuals develop as responsible and caring persons and live as participating members of a pluralist society'. (Taylor, 1995:24)

The emphasis here on personal and social values, moral values and democratic citizenship is not intended to exclude other values. Indeed, recent official publications tend to link moral with spiritual values (National Curriculum Council, 1993; Office for Standards in Education, 1994a), and strong claims are commonly made about links between moral and aesthetic values (cf. Jarrett, 1991) and between spiritual and aesthetic (Starkings, 1993). Other values frequently mentioned in the context of the school include values relating to

cultural diversity, cultural identity and national consciousness; intellectual and academic values; peace, international understanding, human rights and environmental values; gender equality and antiracism; work and economic values; health; and common human values such as tolerance, solidarity and cooperation (cf. Taylor, 1994a). Many of these are discussed more fully in Chapters 2 to 9.

One of the main differences between the American and the British approach to values education is that the former, in the absence of organized traditions of religious or social authority in public institutions, places a stronger emphasis on democratic education, both in terms of teaching the child about how society works and in terms of preparation for citizenship through active participation in school life. Values education in British schools, on the other hand, as in much of Europe, is affected by closer involvement with religion: a third of British schools are denominational institutions, religious education is still a compulsory part of the basic curriculum in all schools, collective worship is part of the statutory school day, and there is a strong official view that religious education and collective worship are central to children's moral and spiritual development (National Curriculum Council, 1993). There is an assumption among those who do not share this official view that a gradual decline among religiously based values will occur (White, 1987:22), leading to the slow disappearance of specialized religious and moral instruction and the emergence of citizenship courses as the main focus for children's moral development in school (Cha, Wong and Meyer, 1988:12). Whether this asumption is justified, however, is very much open to question.

Whatever form values education takes, there is a major debate about whether schools should instil values in pupils or teach them to explore and develop their own values. On the former view, which is sometimes called character education (Lickona, 1991), values education involves two tasks:

1. the identification of appropriate values, which is the responsibility of schools, educationalists, or society at large through its elected representatives (see Chapters 11 and 12);
2. the transmission of these approved values to children. This may be carried out in many different areas of the school's provision: in curriculum subjects and cross-curricular themes (see Chapter 13), and in sport, community links, fundraising for charity, extra-curricular activities generally, teacher–pupil relationships, the structures and management of the school, school discipline, the pastoral system, the processes of teaching and learning, the hidden curriculum and the ethos of the school (see Chapter 14).

There are two main problems with the character education approach. The first is the difficulty of identifying appropriate values and ensuring a consistent approach within the school; there is no shortage of lists, but often little agreement between them (cf. Goggin, 1994; Lickona, 1988:8; Beck, 1990:148). The

second problem is that the approach pays too little attention to, and may be in direct conflict with, the values that children learn outside the school, from the home, the media and their peers. Thus it takes no account of how young people make sense of these different sources of values (see Chapters 10 and 15).

The second view of values education, that it is centrally concerned with teaching children to explore and develop their own feelings and values, has been linked in North America particularly to the approach known as values clarification. This approach, developed particularly by Raths, *et al.* (1966) and Simon, Howe and Kirshenbaum (1972), is based on two assumptions: that children will care more about values which they have thought through and made their own than about values simply passed down by adults; and that it is wrong, particularly in a pluralist society, to seek to impose values. According to Raths, *et al.* (1966), legitimate valuing involves seven criteria: values must be 1) chosen freely 2) from alternatives 3) after consideration of the consequences, and an individual must 4) cherish, 5) publicly affirm, and 6) act on, the value, and 7) do so repeatedly. Undoubtedly, values clarification can develop confidence and self-esteem, but it has been criticized widely for being rooted in a spurious relativism and for failing to recognize that it is possible to make mistakes in matters of value (cf. Kilpatrick, 1992: Ch. 4). Values clarification has rarely been advocated openly in the UK, though the influence of its philosophy can be seen in the Humanities Curriculum Project (Schools Council/Nuffield Humanities Project, 1970), and it may in fact underlie the approaches of many texts and materials in use in schools.

Alternative approaches to teaching children to explore and develop their own values include the *moral reasoning* approach and the *just community* approach, both associated with Kohlberg (1981–1984). In *moral reasoning*, children are presented with moral dilemmas and are encouraged to discuss them in a way which it is intended will help them to see the inadequacies of their current moral thinking and move to a higher level (Blatt and Kohlberg, 1975). The *just community* approach is designed to help students to develop responsible moral behaviour by coming to share group norms and a sense of community. A community cluster within a school is made up of about 100 students and five teachers who meet on a weekly basis to make rules and discipline and to plan community activities and policies. The aim is to introduce students to participatory democracy and to give them greater opportunities for self regulation and moral awareness (Kohlberg and Higgins, 1987).

These approaches, too, have been subject to strong criticism, as playing down the social and cultural influences on people's values, underestimating the need to learn basic values before tackling controversies and failing to take adequate account of a more feminine ethic of care, responsibility and love (Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 1984).

Current thinking about values education tends to favour eclecticism. In the USA, former proponents of values clarification tend now to support an approach which combines the best of moral guidance *and* values clarification