

Press release: PM reveals package of measures to promote a more peaceful, prosperous and democratic Western Balkans

Prime Minister Theresa May today announces a package of measures to help the Western Balkans prosper by improving the collective security and economic stability of the region.

The Prime Minister will welcome the six Western Balkan leaders to London today, alongside other European figures such as German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and the Polish Prime Minister, Mateusz Morawiecki, for the 5th annual Western Balkans Summit under the Berlin Process.

The Berlin Process, established in 2014, has already achieved a great deal in the region – advancing the economic integration, building energy and transport links, and forging connections between civil society and young people.

The package announced today will complement this progress, helping build a more peaceful, prosperous and democratic Western Balkans.

It will help the region to address complex security challenges, particularly around serious and organised crime and drug smuggling, which in turn will help prevent illicit activity on the streets in the UK.

Organised Crime Groups from the Western Balkans have a significant nationwide presence in the UK. UK cooperation with the region and European partners has previously delivered positive results, including bringing down a crime network which was estimated to have imported an average of more than 8,000kg of cocaine a year into the UK, with an estimated street value of £800m.

Encouraged by these results and recognising the importance of the Western Balkans, the Prime Minister wants to go further to strengthen the security and economic integrity of the region.

Prime Minister, Theresa May said:

I am proud to host this year's Western Balkans Summit, bringing together leaders from across the region with European partners to look at how we can ensure the economic stability and collective security of the Western Balkans.

For history shows that a stable and secure Western Balkans region means a more stable and secure Europe. We are leaving the EU next March, but we remain fully committed to improving the prosperity and security of the Western Balkans, and Europe, both now and in

the years to come.

The package that I have announced today will help the Western Balkans tackle threats to their progress, such as serious and organised crime, drug trafficking and terrorism, while also having a positive effect in the UK by cutting off criminal activity at the source and helping prevent crime from reaching British streets.

The new package, which demonstrates the government's enduring commitment to the region, includes:

- increasing UK funding to the region by over 95% from £41 million in 18/19 to £80 million in 20/21 from the Conflict, Security and Stability Fund
- doubling the number of UK staff working in the region on the security issues affecting the UK and the Western Balkans. These experts will help stop crime reaching UK streets and also help strengthen the region's own response to serious and organised crime, terrorism and violent extremism, corruption and money laundering
- launching the Balkans Organised Crime Observatory, jointly with the Austrian and Norwegian governments which will enable civil society to play a more effective role in tackling organised crime and corruption. Led by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, this will serve as a virtual network for key civil society actors to work together to monitor, report on and expose Serious and Organised Crime and corruption, share research and good practice and improve strategic and operational coordination
- improving the region's cyber capability through a £1m investment in training and advisory activities. This includes direct support to Computer Emergency Response Teams in Serbia and Montenegro, launching a Security Fellowships course on cyber security, and providing strategic support to Governments across the region, and establishing a UK-Western Balkans Security Discourse on Cyber Security to enhance UK bilateral and regional relationships and information sharing among senior cyber officials
- agreeing a Joint Declaration on the Principles of Information-Exchange in the Field of Law Enforcement that will help law enforcement agencies in the region share information more easily in the fight against serious and organised crime and terrorism. Countries will also commit to concrete actions to tackle corruption
- chairing a senior-level Security Commitments Steering Group to push for better exchange of information and best practice, including through establishing regional forums, the first of which for customs officers. These will meet regularly at senior and operational level to discuss strategic approaches and complex transnational financial criminal investigation
- extending the Pan Balkans Strategic Reserve Force (SRF) for another year which is held at readiness in the UK to move into the Western Balkans if the security situation deteriorates or the UK needs to support stability in the region. The current UK commitment to maintain the SRF ends on 31st December. We are extending this for another year as a demonstration

of our commitment to maintain security and stability in the Western Balkans

- committing £10 million to help build digital skills and employment prospects for young people in the Western Balkans. The British Council will provide training to children in over 4,500 schools, to bolster digital literacy and core skills across the region. By providing access to a digital education, this funding will help foster the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs
- providing an additional £1million to help the region address difficult legacy issues, including supporting the organisations working to find and identify the 12,000 victims still missing from the conflicts of the 1990s

Speech: Protecting children today prevents conflict tomorrow

Thank you very much indeed, Mr Prime Minister, and let me join others in welcoming Sweden to her presidency and to thank our Russian colleagues for their stewardship during the past month. We're also very pleased Mr Prime Minister that you have convened this debate today. It is very important for the Council to focus on the protection of children as a key element of conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

Like others, I would like to pay tribute to Yenny's own insights into the effect of conflict. What she said about addressing the root causes is a theme that has been picked up by many speakers today. And of course I thank the Executive Director and the Special Representative for their efforts but also for their efforts internationally and on the ground to protect and prevent children from being the victims of armed conflict.

In this regard Mr President, the UK joins others in welcoming the publication of the Secretary-General's Annual Report. Thanks to the courageous and committed work of monitoring and reporting teams all over the world, the report continues to produce a reliable, evidence-based set of metrics which this Council, the UN and others need in order to take effective action. But it also shows an alarming trend: In 2017 the number of both find violations against children in conflict increased by a shocking 35 percent. It is vital that the Council addresses this and I welcome this debate today. Mr President, we've heard a lot about the next generation. We were able to hear some very good news from Cote d'Ivoire and I was interested in those experiences and also on what is happening in Nigeria.

But as the Council saw for itself on its mission to Bangladesh and Myanmar, there are too many children who bear the physical scars of armed conflict. We saw children amputees, a poignant and disturbing reminder of quite what conflict does to children. We need to take better care, Mr President, of the

next generation so that they can take care, in turn, of their societies. There is no single answer to how we do this and we've had a lot of ideas put forward today. I won't repeat those. The United Kingdom shares many of the suggestions that were put forward today but I would like to concentrate, if I may, on one particular action and one that can have an overwhelmingly positive effect on improving stability and reducing conflict. This is a Sustainable Development Goal number four; making sure that everybody gets a quality education. This was something that Yenny but also a number of Permanent Representatives have drawn attention to.

As we all know, women play a vital role in the prevention and resolution of conflict and peace-building. This means also in peace talks and in re-establishing the fabric of a recovering society. And yet we know that conflict restricts access to education and it restricts access to girls' education in particular. So we should see Mr President, what we can do to ameliorate that.

Reintegration program should include education as a core component. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes should be age and gender sensitive so that they meet the needs of all children. And we need to ensure that, worldwide, girls receive the education that allows them to participate fully in governance, towards the achievement of durable peace security and reconciliation and hence ultimately towards conflict prevention.

In 2016, a staggeringly small amount of humanitarian aid was invested in education, a mere 1.4 percent. It goes without saying that this is not enough. We should all do more to place education at the heart of our approach to security and development. For our part, the United Kingdom is committed to providing educational support to millions of children around the world in need of education in emergencies and protracted crises. In Syria and the wider region, following on from UNICEF's No Lost Generation initiative, we allocated \$110 million to provide protection, trauma care and education for children affected by the crisis in Syria and the wider region. We are the largest bilateral donor to Education Cannot Wait and we're committing \$40 million this year to support conflict affected children in Uganda.

And finally, as other speakers have noted, we need to ensure that schools themselves are protected. Whilst International Humanitarian Law is the primary basis for the protection of schools and education facilities, the Safe Schools declaration which the United Kingdom has recently endorsed reflects our commitment to the provision and access to high quality education in humanitarian situations and protracted crises. We align ourselves with the statement that will be delivered by Argentina on behalf of all those who endorsed the declaration and we would like to take this opportunity to call on all of our international partners to follow suit.

As set out in the first line of the UN Charter, and much quoted today; our goal is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We need to begin with our children. They are absolutely vital to a better future.

Speech: Amanda Spielman's speech to the Policy Exchange think tank

The title of this speech, 'The Ties that Bind', is not an original phrase. And indeed, as soon as the invitations for this Policy Exchange event went out, we had a call from an understandably bemused Lords Committee clerk wondering why they had not been consulted, because their Committee on Citizenship and Civic Engagement published a report with this title earlier this year, and for which one of my colleagues gave evidence. So, apologies to Lord Hodgson and his eminent fellow peers – I had not then seen their excellent report, though I have now read it with great interest.

And of course a great deal of overdue thinking and discussion has happened in many quarters in recent years on the difficult subjects of community cohesion, integration, citizenship and British values, by minds far more distinguished than mine. Indeed, when I took up the job of Chief Inspector, I hardly imagined this was a subject I would be spending quite so much time on. But having spent 18 months in what is a fairly hot seat at Ofsted, I have seen quite how much these challenges directly affect our schools.

That is my topic this evening: to explore why the promotion of British values is important in encouraging cohesion and integration, and so why responsibility for promoting them must fall to our schools. And I also want to talk about Ofsted's role in making sure that schools do this well.

Taking a step back for a few minutes, it was the experience of living and working in the United States, more than 20 years ago, that made me recognise how much the development of a society, and the formation of its public policy, is driven by the values that underlie that society. Even though the UK and the United States are more similar than most, I came to realise how different their underlying values and assumptions were, and still are. And I'm not talking about guns and abortions here – I was most struck then about things like the welfare settlement, and the idea of what education is for. The version of egalitarianism that has been the bedrock of NHS provision and of the English state school system for many decades looks quite strange to many American eyes. And I was genuinely surprised back then by how very differently the word 'liberalism' was perceived in America. All this made me look back at and think about Britain in a whole different way.

But despite these differences, what marks out both the UK and the US as successful societies is that they have each developed a core of values shared by a large majority of their citizens, and built systems of public provision on those values, safe in the assumption that, despite the range of political opinion, enough consensus exists around values for people to compromise where necessary in the collective interest. Though perhaps the limits of that consensus are being somewhat stretched by the current occupant of the Oval

Office.

This assumption of shared values has worked well for a couple of reasons. The US has famously put a strong emphasis on national unity and assimilation, to an extent that actually makes many British people feel slightly uneasy. So, for example, the pledge of allegiance must be recited regularly in schools, in all but 4 states.

In England, the nearest analogue is the requirement for a daily act of collective worship, which if we are being honest gets lip service, if that, in many schools. More generally, England has had a more laissez-faire approach to integration, with multiculturalism and assimilation both valued.

But the context has changed in recent years. Immigrant populations are quite unevenly distributed, and so in many parts of England we now have schools that educate mainly or almost entirely children from relatively recently arrived families, or that at least use another language at home. For instance, across England, there are just under 2,000 state-funded schools where more than half of pupils have English as an additional language. More than 40 percent of EAL children are in the relatively small minority of schools where half or more of children are EAL. Even the accidental segregation resulting from geography makes it less likely that integration will happen by default.

In December 2016, the Casey Review was published. More recently, the government's [Integrated Communities Strategy green paper](#), published in March this year, sets out starkly the scale of the challenge and the need for all organs of the state to play an active role in fostering integration. That strategy is a clear recognition that the current approach to integration needs strengthening, and that our efforts to promote community cohesion must involve a common vision; a sense of belonging; valuing diversity; and ensuring equal opportunities. The work of schools in promoting British values sits at the heart of that strategy.

The current meaning of the term 'British values' was first defined in the [2011 Prevent Strategy](#). The role of schools in promoting them was formalised in Department for Education guidance in 2014, to help both independent and state schools understand their responsibilities. This guidance set out the duty of all schools in England, state and independent, to 'actively promote' the 4 British values of:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Like many, I recognise the wider significance of these values. They ensure the legitimacy and effectiveness of government for all citizens, and they provide a unifying framework for a multi-racial society, to build on what is already held in common. They are values that promote both trust and the willingness to contribute to the common good. They create a space in which

minority beliefs, lifestyles and cultures can exist freely and in harmony, but also a common set of values that help to strengthen the bonds of our shared society. They therefore have an importance far beyond preventing extremism and terrorism.

For Ofsted, making sure that the next generation understands, respects and is willing to adopt these values is essential. They are values that give a simple message to our young people: in Britain, no matter what your background, you can fit in, you can succeed and you can belong.

The Lords Committee, in its response to the green paper, endorses the values strongly:

Our first conclusion is that, while a variety of faiths, beliefs and customs can enrich our society, and respect for the values of others is a high priority, respect for the law must come first. There is no place for rules or customs whose effect is to demean or marginalise people or groups – equality before the law is a cornerstone of our society. This is why the rule of law, together with a commitment to democracy, individual liberty and respect for the inherent worth and autonomy of all people, are the shared values of British citizenship from which everything else proceeds. These are “red lines” which have to be defended.

The government believes that promoting British values in schools helps young people leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. If that is our aim then it must be right that Ofsted inspects against this policy. We know that this belief is shared by many people in education, yet we do not go unchallenged in our work.

The Lords Committee noted that many people regret the context in which these values were originally formulated – in the context of a counter-extremism strategy. It suggested that they need to be re-framed in a non-securitised and more positive context. They expressed a desire to rename them as Shared Values of British Citizenship, as well as broadening the scope of ‘respect’ beyond matters of faith and belief.

The most frequent criticism expressed to me is that the values are universal, and not exclusively British. People who make this criticism often prefer a model grounded in individual human rights. But I am not aware that any claim has ever been made for British ownership of the list. And indeed, as the Lords Committee said in its argument for renaming them:

...this does not imply that no other country can share them in whole or in part, but that they are civic values which should be adhered to by all people in Britain. Values which stand in opposition cannot and should not be described as British.

And therein lies the point: while these values are not unique to Britain or

British society, they are integral to our ethos.

And these values are in fact far from universal. A few months ago, after similar points had been made to me for the umpteenth time, I did a little empirical investigation of my own. There are a number of international surveys by credible organisations that compare different countries on things like democracy and the rule of law. I looked for and found fairly recent surveys covering all 4 values.

For democracy, there is the [EIU Democracy Index](#); for the rule of law, the [World Justice Project Index](#); for liberty, I found the [Cato Institute Freedom Index](#) and for religious tolerance, a [Pew Center index of religious restrictions](#). While religious restrictions are a slightly different thing, their existence generally goes along with unequal treatment of different religions, so I have taken this index as a proxy measure. Each of these surveys covers a number of countries. They cover not just intent – whether a value is recognised and publicly endorsed – but also whether it is realised in practice.

These 4 surveys give some perspective on the universality or otherwise of the 4 core values.

The EIU Democracy Index is an interesting place to start. It surveys 167 countries, which between them account for the vast majority of the world population. It categorises 19 countries, which between them have less than 5% of the world's population, as full democracies, and a further 57 countries, with a further 44% of the world population, as flawed democracies. That puts more than half the countries covered, and more than half of the world population, in either the 'authoritarian regime' or 'hybrid regime' categories. About 32% of people live in authoritarian countries. It is a sad fact that in recent years more countries have moved away from full democracy than towards it.

The World Justice Project Index for the rule of law similarly finds that surprisingly few countries get a clean bill of health – 11 are graded 'very high' and a further 11 as 'high'. The Pew Center looks at all 198 countries and territories, and scores about half as having low government restrictions on religion, but a surprising number even of European countries are deemed to have moderate or even in a couple of places high restrictions.

Now one can always quibble with aspects of the classification in these surveys, and the boundaries are obviously not clear-cut. But a surprisingly small number of countries come out consistently in the top group on all of these criteria: on the particular set of surveys I looked at, they were Australia, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the UK. The World Justice Project didn't include some smaller countries: Ireland and Luxembourg might have joined the select group if it had. The other Scandinavian and German speaking countries all missed out by reason of the Pew Center scoring of religious restrictions. Widening the top 2 categories across the board would have brought them in along with the United States, a few in the far East, and, interestingly, Uruguay.

But what is striking is how many countries would still be absent from the list. There are a lot of countries that are not democracies, and a lot that do not permit their citizens religious freedom, or do much to protect individual liberty. And the rule of law is so imperfectly implemented in many countries that it is hard to attach a great deal of value to it.

That such a small handful of countries fall into the category of fully embracing what we call 'British values' should be proof enough that we cannot simply take them for granted. And nor can we assume that because they exist now, they always will. To illustrate this, consider a recent US poll, commissioned by the Bush and Biden Foundations. It found that a majority of Americans, 55%, now label American democracy as "weak", with two-thirds saying it is getting weaker. A startling study of attitudes to democracy by Yascha Mounk and Roberto Foa found that while in Britain almost 70% of those born in the 1930s think it is essential to live in a democracy, that figure falls to just over 25% for those born in the 1980s. That bears thinking about: barely more than a quarter of so-called millennials in this country believe that democracy is essential.

Some of the reasons for this are well documented: poorly managed economic dislocation, combined with the abuse by some of their positions of wealth and authority, have led to disenchantment with the status quo. That disenchantment can so easily be exploited by extremists, who promise a better tomorrow by scapegoating and blaming minorities today. This is why it is right that the Prevent duty also focuses on tackling the growth of the far right. At the opposite, but strikingly similar, end of the spectrum, Islamist extremists – particularly fuelled by the online propaganda of Daesh and others – prey on a sense of isolation and alienation in some minority communities.

This poses a number of problems for schools. The first is that schools with the job of promoting British values and equalities are sometimes teaching young people who get conflicting or even downright contradictory messages outside school. For example, freedom of belief is inimical to the prevailing view in some communities. Similarly, the acceptance of the equal rights of women or of gay rights may not fit with the views a child hears at home. No wonder, therefore, that some young people feel torn between different identities.

Yet, in many ways this is not a new challenge but a constant one. Attitudes can and do shift over time, but they don't change in an ordered way, and the studies I just quoted show how they can move in both directions. Just look at how much British society has changed in the past century or two. The dismantling of restrictions on Catholics was completed less than 2 centuries ago; legal equality for women was achieved in my lifetime, after a century of gradual progress starting with the Married Womens' Property Act; equality for gay men and women more recently still; and transgender rights are still not fully secured, something last week's government action plan seeks to address. Social attitude surveys from 50 or even 20 years ago show a dramatically different picture from today. For example, in 1987, only a generation ago, just 11% of the British public said that same-sex relationships are not wrong at all, and yet by 2016 this had reached 64%.

A second problem for schools is that history, culture and experience can lead to a strong identification by a child with their family's cultural group to the exclusion of all else. To quote a recent piece by Andrew Sullivan:

The problem with tribalism is that it knows no real limiting principle. It triggers a deep and visceral response: a defence of the tribe before all other considerations. That means, in its modern manifestation, that the tribe comes before the country as a whole, before any neutral institutions that get in its way, before reason and empiricism, and before the rule of law. It means loyalty to the tribe – and its current chief – is enforced relentlessly.

And I'm not saying here that it is a problem for people to belong to a well-defined group, whether political, religious, cultural, geographical or simply social. Indeed, there are well-documented advantages to belonging to communities. Where it becomes problematic is when a particular identity is taken to preclude or, at worst, justify hostility to any other group affiliation.

The increasing fragmentation of the media probably makes this problem worse. Rather than engaging in and debating a common narrative – for instance the one provided by broadcast news at 6 or 10 – people use social media to follow news sources that reinforce rather than challenge their views. Among majority communities, this can lead to a desire to blame 'the other'. It can lead to the backlash against minorities, and against liberalism, that we've seen across the globe in recent years. Combined with economic malaise, it can lead to a rejection of the move towards social liberalism of the past half century. As Robert Putnam says, 'social dislocation can easily breed a reactionary form of nostalgia'. Where minority communities are already feeling isolated and alienated, they can themselves be preyed upon by extremists, making the job of schools even harder.

The third practical difficulty for schools, is that education, rightly, is seen neither by policymakers nor by teachers as indoctrination. Education should not and does not aim to force children to adhere to British values and to disclaim all others. Nor does it try to turn children against their parents or their cultural heritage.

Yet, we know that some teachers feel unclear about, or even uncomfortable with, what is expected of schools. So, let me explain what I think is being asked of them. In my view, teachers are expected to give children a proper understanding of British values, and of what these values have contributed – and continue to contribute to – the strength and success of British society.

The Lords Committee sees the need as being for better citizenship education. It calls for a statutory entitlement with (inevitably) extra focus by Ofsted and an explicit link to the outstanding judgement. That, of course, is a question for the government. Regardless, I would argue that there is much more that can be done within the existing school curriculum and, in particular, across all the humanities.

Taking the history curriculum first: the key stage 3 statutory programme of study includes as suggested topics:

- the struggle between Church and crown
- Magna Carta and the emergence of Parliament
- the English Reformation and Counter-Reformation (Henry VIII to Mary I)
- Britain's transatlantic slave trade: its effects and its eventual abolition
- the French Revolutionary wars
- women's suffrage

Many of these topics show how the 4 values have come about, and can bring home how many lives it has cost to establish and protect them. For example, the persecution of Catholics in England in the 16th century highlights the suffering that can follow from the absence of religious freedom. And some topics in modern history, such as the study of the Holocaust or Stalinist Russia, serve particularly well to illustrate the terrible human cost of totalitarianism and of prejudice against minorities.

Similarly, the study of geography can also be used to look at where physical, political, ethnic and religious borders coincide, and where they don't, and at how the resulting distributions of people and of economic and political power translate into accommodations and conflicts, economic development or its absence, and into patterns of migration.

Religious education can contribute a great deal to mutual understanding in a multi-ethnic state. And while it can be quite straightforward to cover the factual information about the rituals and observances and meeting places of different faiths, there is far more that it can do. During my time at Ofqual, the exam regulator, we worked on the new religious studies GCSE, which for the first time is requiring students to study two religions. This means that they study at least one that is not their own, so they arrive at some understanding of the differences between faiths. And religious education also has the potential to develop children's understanding of the diversity that often exists within as well as between faiths: after all, most faiths actually encompass a spectrum of views, from liberal to conservative.

Religious education done well helps children understand where values overlap and where they diverge, and hence the basis for the tensions that can arise between and sometimes even within faiths. It can help them understand the tensions that can arise between faith and other legally established rights, such as the rights of women and rights relating to sexuality. And done well it allows children to understand how their own faith relates to the wider world, both in terms of attitudes and the prevailing law. Again, this is not about indoctrination, rather about making sure that young people have the knowledge to make their own informed choices.

This is one of many reasons I have been putting so much emphasis on the importance of the curriculum: the real substance of education. I've talked before about why I believe a rich and deep knowledge-based curriculum is a vital driver of social mobility. But there's another reason that the curriculum is vitally important in preparing young people for life in modern

Britain – a shared body of knowledge constitutes the building blocks of a coherent society. It gives young people an understanding of the forces that have shaped and continue to shape their history and nation. It helps them be discriminating about fake news and siren voices. The EBacc isn't just about helping young people fulfil their academic potential: it's about the various branches of knowledge that are vital to the functioning of a shared society.

We've seen first-hand the consequences of locking young people out of that shared corpus, of denying them the opportunity to engage with the best that has been thought and said. I believe that the alienation that we see in some communities, whether segregated ethnic communities, or isolated White working-class communities, is in part the result of an education that has not given their young people the tools they need to be active and engaged and constructive citizens.

I want to turn now to our recent experience, drawing on our inspection findings. Ofsted is of course on the front line in observing and reporting on individual schools and on whether the government's education policy is translating into good practice.

When it comes to British values, we often see an oddly piecemeal approach, which too seldom builds the teaching into a strong context. One strange example I saw that illustrates the tendency to superficiality was in a prison classroom. The lesson was on writing a business plan: perfectly sensible stuff about setting out clearly the business idea, who the customers were, how it was going to be sold, how it would be priced, and so on. And then the teacher said 'and of course you have to make sure that the plan reflects British values' and started asking students how they would build each value into their plan.

In another (non-faith) school's policy that I saw recently, they explain that one of the ways they teach fundamental British values is through looking at the seasons and weather, which is surely stretching the definition a bit.

More generally, we see a lot of wall displays and motivational assemblies, but not much coherent thinking about how a real depth of understanding can be built through the academic curriculum, such as the history examples I gave a few minutes ago. Though, as ever, there are some excellent counter-examples. I have learned that I cannot give a speech that mentions a common but not universal deficiency without some expressions of outrage that I have claimed that everyone is deficient, and at least one follow-up invitation to see a school that does that thing particularly well. I only wish I could visit everyone who writes to me.

I am, however, hoping that our renewed focus on curriculum will encourage schools to think more about what they are teaching, and about what they aim to get from that teaching.

And we should remember that, for some children, school may be the only time in their lives that they spend time every day with people from outside their immediate ethnic or religious group, or at least where the values of people outside their own group can be explained and openly discussed.

This is a good point to discuss faith schools and our inspections of them. I've mentioned in other speeches that almost all faith schools do a good job of explaining any tensions between the tenets of their own faith, and the framework of law and policy. Ofsted recognises and indeed frequently acknowledges this publicly. More generally, I want to be absolutely unequivocal: Ofsted has no anti-faith bias or secular agenda.

Where faith schools are performing well, they will continue to be recognised and celebrated by Ofsted. We're also working with a variety of faith groups to help them understand our work better, and to make sure that our inspectors always have the right level of understanding of how those groups practice their faith. To give an example, we have a collaboration with PaJeS (Partnerships for Jewish Schools) to run information sessions for Jewish school leaders on how they can comply with requirements around equalities and British values in a way that is in line with schools' religious teachings.

Overall, my view is that the accommodation of religion in state education that was put in place in 1870 has worked remarkably well for nearly 150 years. Today, we see many faith schools playing a pivotal role in promoting integration. Through accidents of history, many Catholic and Church of England schools are quite ethnically diverse – Catholic schools because the Catholic Church is one single international church, and CofE schools because alongside the traditional village primary, a large number of church schools are concentrated in historic centres of population where immigrants form a large proportion of the population, and so have intakes that are quite diverse, both ethnically and religiously. Simon Burgess's recently published study shows that pupils from one ethnic group feel more positive towards another group if they encounter more pupils from that group in their school. Even small moves away from mono-ethnic schools towards more mixed ones produce positive changes.

In fact, for all of the UK's major religions, the values of kindness, charity, fair treatment and respect for others are integral to the faith ethos they inculcate in their schools. In most faith schools, that ethos encourages integration and a sense of community that goes beyond the confines of the particular religion.

These strengths are borne out in our inspection judgements. Muslim state schools are almost three times as likely to be outstanding than the national average, and Jewish and Christian state schools are more likely to be good or outstanding than their secular counterparts. The suggestion that Ofsted has an anti-faith school bias is simply not true and does not fit the profile of our judgements.

Digging into some inspection reports clearly shows that it is possible to adhere to a faith while respecting the requirements of equalities law.

So, for example, the report for Eden School in Waltham Forest, a Muslim girls' school, reads: >The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' faith systems lead to their participating in worship at start of lessons and demonstrating respect and understanding of the values of the other faiths studied. Pupils live

diversity... They are insightful about what it means to uphold British values.... They are exceptionally well-prepared to live and serve in modern Britain.

Many non-faith schools could probably learn a lot from Eden School's approach.

Another school – Simon Marks Jewish Primary – had a report that said:

The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key strength of the school. It permeates all subjects and all aspects of school life. Leaders map out topics and enrichment experiences to ensure that no opportunity is missed to discuss and learn about key values, including the fundamental British values of tolerance, respect, democracy and the rule of law...For example, following the terrorist acts in London and Manchester, pupils reflected on all the religions they have learned about and decided that no religion would condone such actions.

And to give one more example, from St Damian's RC Science College, Ashton-under-Lyme:

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils is impressive. Pupils are regularly immersed in rich, well-organised opportunities. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders organise theme days, 'Aspire Days', to enable pupils to understand the concept of British values. Pupils have the opportunity to learn about and discuss cultural diversity and faiths such as Hinduism and Islam.

Yet, we have seen worrying developments in a small number of state schools, as well in some independent schools and in unregistered provision. As I have previously had to report, we do find schools where teaching materials and practices are directly at odds with the requirements of the law, especially the independent school standards and equalities law. But there are other problems too that have been less well aired.

First, we see an expanding sense of religious and/or cultural entitlement to have aspects of a school's provision dictated by the preferences of a particular group, whether or not members of that group even constitute the majority of a school's intake. This can affect what is taught and what is not taught, what children take part in and what they are withdrawn from, and what children wear or don't wear.

And people have even questioned why Ofsted has expressed a view in some recent cases. So, here are my reasons.

First, we need to recognise that where this kind of pressure builds up, it can not only undermine the authority of a head, but also limit the extent to

which schools can help build community cohesion and encourage integration. Ofsted must support schools that make justifiable decisions in the interests of all the children who attend their school.

Secondly, we see in some of the more extreme cases that religious group identity and authority are being systematically built up and used to limit individual liberties, such as the right of a girl to enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities as a boy. We made a difficult call in the case of Al-Hijrah School in Birmingham that the segregation practised there infringed the law, and our inspectors' view was upheld in the Court of Appeal.

Thirdly, we see a few schools that set out to withhold from children the knowledge of aspects of science and society that fall squarely within the national curriculum that is the default expectation for all children, but that are deemed incompatible with the relevant faith. And here I'm not just talking about issues related to evolution, reproduction and sexual orientation. A recent state school inspection found that Elizabethan history, chunks of GCSE set texts such as a Sherlock Holmes novel, and most works of art were considered unsuitable for the girls to know about. For a time, exam boards allowed some schools to censor exam papers, even where this meant breaking the rules that protect the integrity of tests.

Again I want to stress that we are talking about a small minority of faith schools here. Most faith schools introduce relevant knowledge at the appropriate time, with clear explanations of any differences between the principles of their faith and British law and the beliefs of others. Indeed, it is worth being clear here on the difference between the requirements around British values and of equalities law. British values must be actively promoted, including the mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. But schools are not required to promote social practices, opinions or lifestyles that they disagree with. Instead, the requirement is for them to convey that these differences exist among us, and are recognised and protected in British law.

In the context of these developments, it is clear that there is a tradition of liberal tolerance across the whole education system that defaults to accommodating religious preferences. Faith itself is, to use the somewhat clunky language of equalities law, one of the 9 protected characteristics. And we often take this preference for accommodating religion in particular quite far: even non-religious people often feel that the preferences of religious groups must be accommodated, even when this means that some children will not receive their full curriculum entitlement.

So, when I have talked about muscular liberalism in the past, it has been about the confidence to sustain our openness and tolerance, and not allow them to be used to accept models of education in this country that close minds and narrow opportunity. All children are born equal, and should know this and know what life opportunities they have – whether or not they choose to take advantage of them in their adult lives. That should apply just as much in Scunthorpe, as in Hackney, as in Cheshire. The draft advice to schools on the independent school standards is rightly clear that the requirement to promote the value of respect for others is not met by

encouraging respect for other people in a general way, without any explanation of the protected characteristics.

It is regrettable that we at Ofsted are experiencing increasing hostility from a few schools to law and policy that do not fit well with the preferences of the most conservative religious groups, and to the parts of government that inspect and regulate. Some groups are quick to allege bias or antagonism on the part of inspectors, and sometimes simply to misrepresent the inspection process. The fact that we have found significant shortcomings in a relatively high proportion of schools in the independent sector is alleged to be evidence of a bias against religion, even though no such difference is identifiable in outcomes for schools in the state sector. Our inspectors find and report on truth as they see it, in line with the law.

And one part of that law, the Equalities Act, is a relatively new piece of legislation. Resolving tensions between the different protected characteristics is never going to be clear cut, but as with so much of the messy British constitution, the law probably gets the balance about right. If people have a problem with it, they should lobby MPs to change the law, not blame Ofsted for carrying out its duty to apply the law as it stands.

I hope all this has explained why Ofsted has a role in this sensitive space, and the importance of us reporting honestly on what we are finding. Because this is how the next generation is being shaped to enter society.

And my final point is to emphasise the importance of making these subjects discussable. For many people, the things I have been talking about today are too sensitive and too difficult for them to want to risk giving offence. They are easy things to skirt, yet the risk of doing so is great. If we leave these topics to the likes of the EDL and BNP on the one hand and Islamists on the other, then the mission of integration will fail. To quote Robert Putnam once more, "people divorced from community, occupation, and association are first and foremost among the supporters of extremism". Putting this back into the more concrete language I used earlier, schools have an extraordinarily important role in making sure that children can fit in, succeed and belong. Ofsted's role is to apply the lever of inspection to help make sure they do it well.

Thank you.

[Press release: New funding for innovative projects to build stronger communities](#)

A new £7 million fund to support trailblazing approaches to building more

integrated communities in England was launched today (9 July 2018) by Secretary of State for Communities Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP.

The [Integrated Communities Innovation Fund](#) will help drive forward the proposals to tackle the key causes of poor integration set out in the government's [Integrated Communities Strategy green paper](#) launched in March 2018.

The Secretary of State launched the fund while giving evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee at Parliament at a session outlining his priorities as the Secretary of State for Communities.

The new Innovation Fund aims to support similar trailblazing projects that will share their learning more widely, allowing other areas to develop proven approaches to tackling the key causes of poor integration.

We are inviting applications to support approaches which help build integrated communities. This includes projects that use sport and physical activity to encourage integration. The government will be working in partnership with Sport England, which is contributing to the new Integrated Communities Innovation Fund, to support projects of this type.

The consultation on the government's Integrated Communities Strategy green paper closed on 5 June 2018. Over 3,500 responses were received from a wide variety of organisations and individuals clearly demonstrating the widespread commitment to building stronger communities across the country. The government will respond to the consultation later this year.

Speaking after the session, Secretary of State for Communities Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

Britain is on the whole a well integrated society, but we have been clear that we need to tackle the persistent challenges of integration in some communities across the country.

The trailblazing projects supported by the fund announced today will drive forward our work to bring all levels of society together, from business leaders to grassroots charities, to tackle the key causes of poor integration.

Jennie Price, CEO of Sport England, said:

I'm very pleased that Sport England is working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to achieve our shared objective of improving integration to strengthen communities.

We believe sport and physical activity is a powerful way of bringing together people from all backgrounds and strengthening the bonds between them.'

The green paper sets out that organisations that work closely with communities must be bold and innovative in order to tackle some of the most difficult integration challenges and that knowledge of what works should be shared.

To support this aim the government is today also announcing support for a new Cohesion and Integration Network. This will bring together organisations and individuals from across national and local government, business, and voluntary and community groups to share their ideas, knowledge and experience.

Professor Ted Cattle, a trustee of the new network, said:

The Cohesion and Integration Network announced today is a great opportunity to boost integration across the country, and ensure that proven ideas and projects can be easily shared replicated elsewhere and not re-invented or lost altogether.

We will be developing toolkits and guidance and making these resources accessible to everybody and as well as investing in skills and training to build the capacity of communities

The [Integrated Communities Innovation Fund](#) builds upon steps already taken to tackle the key causes of poor integration in collaboration with a wide range of partners.

It will complement the government's ongoing work to develop ambitious local integration plans with 5 integration areas across England:

- Blackburn with Darwen
- Bradford
- Peterborough
- Walsall
- Waltham Forest

These 5 local authorities have already demonstrated a keen grasp of the challenges they face and shown a desire to try new things and learn from what works. This learning will be shared more widely as the programme develops.

[Press release: UK nuclear safeguards on track for EU exit](#)

- government sets out the details of new nuclear safeguards regime
- nuclear safeguards legislation receives Royal Assent – UK on track to be able to meet international commitments once Euratom arrangements cease

to apply in the UK

- progress provides certainty to the civil nuclear industry and international partners as the UK prepares for Euratom exit

New proposals on the detail of a new UK nuclear safeguards regime to replace the current regime provided by Euratom, have been set out in a consultation launched today (Monday 9 July 2018).

The [consultation](#) sets out nuclear safeguards regulations that would be made using the powers granted by the Nuclear Safeguards Act, which last month became one of the first pieces of EU Exit legislation to complete its passage through Parliament and receive Royal Assent.

Business and Industry Minister, Richard Harrington said:

The Nuclear Safeguards Act is one of the first pieces of legislation to go through Parliament in preparation for EU Exit and is yet another major milestone in our work to prepare the civil nuclear industry for Euratom exit, ensuring continuity from day 1.

We are setting out proposals for the detail of our own UK framework for safeguards, demonstrating our readiness for EU Exit.

The Nuclear Safeguards Act addresses the United Kingdom's departure from the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), an international organisation that governs the peaceful use of nuclear energy within the EU. The passing of the Act and today's consultation on a new safeguards regime provide a clear signal to the public, industry and international partners that the UK is on track to meet its international commitments from day one of exit.

Nuclear safeguards are important processes through which the UK demonstrates to the international community that civil nuclear material is not diverted into military or weapons programmes.

Today's announcement comes just weeks after the UK's commitment to international safeguards and nuclear non-proliferation was reaffirmed in Vienna, with the signing of 2 new safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

These key agreements with the IAEA – of which the UK is a founding member – are another major milestone in Euratom exit preparations and provide the basis for civil nuclear trading arrangements. This step will be welcomed by the industry in the UK and trading partners around the world.

Further progress towards Euratom Exit has been set out in a [Quarterly update to Parliament](#) published on 28 June, which outlines several key achievements, including the Office for Nuclear Regulation's good progress on preparations for implementing the UK's safeguards regime and the confirmation that all Euratom specific text in the Withdrawal Agreement has now been agreed.

The UK signed a new Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA) with the United

States of America in May, which will allow the UK and US to continue their mutually beneficial civil nuclear cooperation when the current Euratom arrangements cease to apply to the UK.

This US-UK NCA is expected to be the first in a series of new international agreements ensuring uninterrupted cooperation and trade following the UK's exit from Euratom.

Details on how to respond to the consultation and to register interest for the workshops, can be found on the [consultation web page](#).

The Nuclear Safeguards Act 2018 amends the Energy Act 2013 to:

- provide the Office for Nuclear Regulation with a new safeguards function
- create new powers for the Secretary of State to put in place regulations setting out the detail of the domestic safeguards regime

The Act also creates a limited power for the Secretary of State to amend 3 existing pieces of legislation to update references to the new IAEA agreements.

The UK's Voluntary Offer Agreement and Additional Protocol were signed in Vienna on 7 June.

The UK has been a member of the IAEA since its formation in 1957.

The signing of new bilateral agreements with the IAEA, a Voluntary Offer Agreement and Additional Protocol, will replace existing trilateral arrangements between the IAEA, Euratom and the UK.

The new agreements ensure that the IAEA retains its right to inspect all civil nuclear facilities, and continues to receive current safeguards reporting, thereby ensuring that international verification of our safeguards activity continues to be robust. Such agreements have been put in place on a voluntary basis by the 5 nuclear-weapon states parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The new safeguards regime to be established in the UK will be operated by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR). The ONR already regulates nuclear safety and security in the UK and has been making preparation to replace Euratom as the regulator of safeguards.