

<b>Institution:</b> Middlesex University, Department of Education		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA23 (Education)		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Establishing a critical educational response to the Prevent Duty in schools		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2015-20		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Lee Jerome	Associate Professor	2015-
Dr Linda Whitworth	Senior Lecturer	2004-2020
Dr Alex Elwick	RA/ECR/Lecturer	2016-
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2016-2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> The Prevent policy at the Home Office and DfE arises from a security agenda and thus tends to focus on 'safeguarding' young people and 'promoting' the fundamental British values (FBVs). This reduces young people's agency, promotes a narrow form of indoctrination and leaves little room for critical education. Colleagues from the Education Department at Middlesex have both demonstrated the negative impact of the policy and have developed a robust argument for framing Prevent in more explicitly educational terms. Further, they have contributed evidence that schools can engage productively with critical exploration of British values in the context of citizenship education rather than the 'promotion' of values. This approach has been supported by national teacher organisations and has been endorsed by the DfE (through their funding) and recognised in Ofsted inspections, thus indicating we have been able to establish a shift in practice. Further, our alternative approach has reached hundreds of teachers and has proven to have a beneficial impact in engaging students in critical citizenship education.		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<b><i>Phase 1: scoping, consultation and literature review</i></b> Lee Jerome and Linda Whitworth engaged in initial conversations with the national professional organisation, the Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT) and the Expert Subject Advisory Group for Citizenship (ESAG). These discussions identified a sense of unease among practitioners about the duty to 'promote' the FBVs, rather than engage in critical discussion. Lee Jerome subsequently took the lead role in drafting the guidance which was issued by ACT / ESAG (2016). This built on his earlier work in how student teachers engaged in teaching about British values (1) and established an educational perspective by presenting a set of pedagogic principles that would help teachers frame their teaching about Prevent as a controversial issue. This included advice about creating a safe space for controversy; planning a scheme of work; selecting teaching strategies and managing behaviour.		
<b><i>Phase 2: initial empirical research</i></b> ACT secured a Home Office contract in 2016 to run a curriculum development project Building Resilience, which put the advice from phase 1 into action. This project included 10 schools, each developing a locally responsive curriculum project to enact the Prevent policy. Lee Jerome and Alex Elwick undertook the evaluation of this project. Whilst our literature review (2) identifies separate projects that have addressed Prevent in relation to students, staff and the curriculum, this was the first to combine data on all three, and is the only one to collect pre and post-intervention data from students to consider the impact of the teaching. Outcomes include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An evaluation report submitted to ACT and the Home Office (3) which demonstrated that:</li> </ul>		

- Holding open conversations and considering multiple perspectives on terrorism and extremism does not make students more susceptible to these extremist narratives.
- Teachers planned through a range of case studies to teach underlying political concepts.
- Subject knowledge could be challenging for teachers, and some students still appeared to be confused about some key concepts relating to democracy and liberty.
- One article focused on the students' views (4) and demonstrated that:
  - Students wanted their teachers to teach them substantive knowledge about Islamophobia, media literacy, and multiple political perspectives so they could understand terrorism and extremism more thoroughly.
  - They were also able to deal with multiple perspectives on acts of terrorism and resist adopting simplified narratives.
- Another article reflected on new theoretical considerations for controversial issues pedagogy (5) and argued that:
  - Teachers need to be supported to identify what counts as controversial, otherwise they find themselves teaching hypocritically (as though an issue were open to contention, but actually is not).
  - Teachers may also hold negative views of their local communities' views and thus engage in stereotyping.

A second element of our work addressed the impact of the policy on student teachers and the teachers with whom they work. This project, published in 2017, included interviews with 20 teachers and questionnaires with 88 student teachers across several training providers (6). At Middlesex this research was led by Linda Whitworth, and one of the key findings concerned the potentially distorting effects of the word 'British' in the FBVs, a theme which has emerged quite strongly in subsequent smaller case studies.

### **Phase 3: development project and further research**

The research from phase 2 indicated very clearly that there was a risk that the Prevent policy could turn into a narrow project related to restricted forms of cultural identity; but that young people felt they needed schools to tackle this area explicitly and consistently to build their knowledge and critical understanding. The evaluation of the teaching demonstrated some of the strategies that were successful as well as some of the problems that could arise. Lee Jerome (leading for the Education Department at Middlesex) worked with ACT and the English Speaking Union (ESU), to embed these lessons learned into a new curriculum development project, The Deliberative Classroom, which was funded by the DfE. A companion research project (PI Lee Jerome) was also funded by the British Academy, to explore how well teachers can embed deliberation in their classrooms, and the extent to which deliberation promotes deep understanding of the FBVs for students. The research report (7) for this project indicated that:

- Deliberative pedagogies could be used to generate exploratory and critical discussion of controversial issues related to the FBVs.
- The more effective of these discussions demonstrated the development of cognitive empathy (deepening participants' understanding of others) and a shift to multiple perspectives, avoiding simplistic responses.
- There are a range of practical strategies that teachers can employ to deepen the conversations, encourage students to make conceptual connections and develop greater criticality.

Overall this research has demonstrated the effectiveness of the teaching approaches developed in phase 1.

### **3. References to the research**

- (1) Jerome, L. and Clemitshaw, G. (2012) Teaching (about) Britishness? An investigation into trainee teachers' understanding of Britishness in relation to citizenship and the discourse of civic nationalism. *The Curriculum Journal*, 23(1), 19-41.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2012.650468>

- (2) Jerome, L., Elwick, A. & Kazim, R. (2019) The impact of the Prevent duty on schools: A review of the evidence. *British Educational Research Journal*, 45(4), 821-837. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3527>
- (3) Jerome, L. & Elwick, A. (2016) *The Evaluation Report on the ACT Building Resilience Project*. London: ACT. [www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-building-resilience-project](http://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-building-resilience-project)
- (4) Jerome, L. & Elwick, A. (2019) Identifying an Educational Response to the Prevent Policy: Student Perspectives on Learning about Terrorism, Extremism and Radicalisation. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 67(1), 97-114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2017.1415295>
- (5) Jerome, L. & Elwick, A. (2020) Teaching about Terrorism, Extremism and Radicalisation: Some Implications for Controversial Issues Pedagogy. *Oxford Review of Education*, 46(2), 222-237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2019.1667318>
- (6) Elton-Chalcraft, S., Lander, V., Revell, L., Warner, D. & Whitworth, L. (2017) To promote, or not to promote fundamental British values? Teachers' standards, diversity and teacher education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 43(1), 29-48. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3253>
- (7) Jerome, L., Liddle, A. and Young, H. (2020) *The Deliberative Classroom and the Development of Secondary Students' Conceptual Understanding of Democracy*. London: ACT & Middlesex University. <https://leejerome.wixsite.com/leejerome/the-deliberative-classroom>

## Awards, prizes and grants:

	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 3
Grant awardee	ACT	ACT, Middlesex, ESU	Lee Jerome (PI)
Title	Building Resilience	The Deliberative Classroom development project	The Deliberative Classroom research project
Sponsor	Home Office	Department for Education	British Academy
Dates	1/3/16-31/8/16	1/12/16-30/9/18	1/4/18-1/10/19
Amount	£57,300	£52,425	£9,360
Notes	Lee Jerome employed as evaluator (£3,000)	Lee Jerome on Steering Group and contributing author	Small Research Grant SRG\170492

The article Jerome, Elwick & Kazim (2019) has been highly commended by the editorial team at BERJ and selected as one of best three articles from 2019. [www.bera.ac.uk/publication/british-education-research-journal](http://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/british-education-research-journal)

**4. Details of the impact*****The problem being addressed and our impact***

The Prevent policy was initiated in the Home Office as a security policy to counter extremism and terrorism, and has been translated as a security policy into education (e.g. Panjwani, 2016). Empirical work shows that teachers have largely implemented Prevent as a safeguarding policy and commonly teach the fundamental British Values' (FBVs) uncritically (Busher & Jerome, 2020). Lee Jerome and colleagues in the Education Department at Middlesex University have worked collaboratively with external partners to shift the discourse towards critical citizenship education and treating Prevent as a controversial issue in the classroom. Our impact is evident in the endorsement of the DfE and the take-up by practitioners in schools.

***Impact 1: Influencing policymakers***

The critical educational case for framing the Prevent Duty as a controversial issue was developed by Lee Jerome (Middlesex Department of Education) working with colleagues at ACT and the ESAG for Citizenship. Initially this approach was met with scepticism from the lead inspector for extremism at Ofsted, who suggested it was politically ill-judged.

Nevertheless, this approach won endorsement from the Home Office, when it was used as the basis for a curriculum development project by ACT. The 'Building Resilience' project ran in 2016 and Lee Jerome and Alex Elwick (both from the Education Department at Middlesex) led the evaluation of this project, which demonstrated that the approach was warmly welcomed by staff and students.

The findings from the 'Building Resilience' evaluation were used to develop a subsequent proposal to the DfE, when it issued an invitation to tender for a knowledge-rich debate project for schools to engage with the Prevent policy. Middlesex collaborated with ACT and the English Speaking Union (ESU) to submit a proposal which challenged the initial DfE's assumptions, and which argued for a commitment to deliberation in its broadest sense (as opposed to competitive debating) and a thematic citizenship approach to dealing with knowledge (as opposed to an historical approach). This project was funded by the DfE (despite a number of rival bids) as 'The Deliberative Classroom' project, to produce a sequence of lessons about controversial issues, a handbook for teachers, and a training video for teachers (1). That project was launched at the ACT annual conference in 2017 by the Deputy Director of the Due Diligence and Counter Extremism Division at the DfE.

In June 2020, Lee Jerome and co-authors involved in an edited collection (Busher & Jerome, 2020) presented the evidence about what constituted an effective critical educational response to the Prevent Duty in an online seminar for the DfE. This was organised by the Prevent Implementation and PEO Network Lead at the DfE and involved 40 Prevent Education Officers from priority areas around the country.

Lee Jerome's research and collaborations with external partners has encouraged the Home Office and DfE to support the critical citizenship educational framing of the Prevent Duty, which had originally been greeted with scepticism by Ofsted. The research-informed practical projects not only won government funding, but also encouraged the DfE to review their own project priorities. The DfE itself has facilitated the dissemination of this research to their network of Prevent Education Officers. Whilst the headline policy guidance from the DfE has not changed, this endorsement represents a significant shift in how the DfE interprets and promotes Prevent and the FBVs in practice.

### ***Impact 2: Impact on teachers***

Lee Jerome was lead author on a guidance document which explicitly endorsed the message that teachers should engage with Prevent through the pedagogy of 'teaching controversial issues'. This approach has proved popular with practitioners and some inspectors. The guidance webpage had been visited 4,354 times and the guidance documents have been downloaded 964 times. The testimony provided by a large FE provider (2) indicates that the guidance was "instrumental in informing [their] staff development programme to promote the 'safe place to learn' concept." This was recognised in their Ofsted report as a contributory factor in their outstanding judgement for leadership.

The evaluation of the Building Resilience project demonstrated that young people particularly valued the approach adopted by their teachers in implementing this guidance (3). Students commonly argued that they were surprised teachers had left it so late to teach about terrorism and extremism, given that these were important topics to understand. They also outlined how they wanted religious, political and media literacy to enable them to understand acts of terrorism. Several of the participating teachers worked with Lee Jerome to offer a collaborative keynote session to 70 practitioners and academics at the 2017 Five Nations Conference in Dublin and, in turn, this was written up as an article for a practitioner journal, which distilled advice for good practice (4). The feedback was positive and included one delegate from Ireland who singled out this session as helping her to develop her own teaching of controversial issues.

Lee Jerome (leading for Middlesex) was the main author for the handbook and lesson materials for the Deliberative Classroom. The ACT webpages (one of 3 sites where the work is published) have received 3,989 visits and the DfE report that average dwell time on their webpages is 6 minutes, reflecting serious engagement. In addition to this evidence of engagement / reach, the research report (5) illustrates the positive impact of this project, shifting the classroom from teacher-led to student-led talk, promoting exploratory discussions, and engaging students with critical thinking about the FBVs. The testimonial from one

participating teacher (6) confirmed that “the discussions which came from the students showed far deeper thought and understanding” than those linked to other resources dealing with the FBVs.

### **Summary of impact**

Policy at the Home Office and DfE tends to focus on ‘safeguarding’ young people and ‘promoting the FBVs’ and Ofsted initially expressed scepticism that Prevent should be perceived as a controversial issue. Colleagues from the Education Department at Middlesex have developed a robust argument for framing Prevent in more explicitly educational terms and have contributed evidence that schools can engage productively with critical exploration of British values in the context of citizenship education rather than the ‘promotion’ of values. This approach was supported by national teacher organisations (7) and has now been endorsed by the DfE through their funding and recognised in Ofsted inspections, indicating a shift in focus. Further, it has reached hundreds of teachers and has proven to have a beneficial impact in engaging students in critical citizenship education.

### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

- (1) ACT, Middlesex University & ESU (2017) [The Deliberative Classroom](#). London: ACT.  
*These resources demonstrate the extent to which the DfE had come to endorse the approach adopted in this programme. Despite the DfE’s initial preference for historical knowledge and debating, they funded the project to develop conceptual knowledge and deliberative talk.*
- (2) Testimonial from CITB (FE training provider for 10,000 students).  
*This outlines how one large FE college used the original guidance and how this was instrumental in their Ofsted inspection. It demonstrates how the guidance was of practical use and how its implementation overcame the initial scepticism of Ofsted.*
- (3) Jerome, L. & Elwick, A. (2016) [The Evaluation Report on the ACT Building Resilience Project](#). London: ACT. [www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-building-resilience-project](http://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-building-resilience-project)  
*This demonstrates how the initial guidance was implemented across ten schools, it includes positive evaluations from over 200 students and highlights the positive impact on their learning.*
- (4) Baker, Z., Blachford, H., Canning, L. & Khan, S. (2017) [Building Resilience](#). *Teaching Citizenship*, 45: 36-8.  
*This demonstrates the lessons learned by the teachers involved in the Building Resilience project.*
- (5) Jerome, L., Liddle, A. and Young, H. (2020) [The Deliberative Classroom and the Development of Secondary Students’ Conceptual Understanding of Democracy](#). London: Middlesex University.  
*This report demonstrates the success of the Deliberative Classroom approach to teaching the FBVs and highlights some key lessons learned, which provide insight into teaching practice.*
- (6) Testimonial from SL School  
*This is from a school participating in the Deliberative Classroom project and it demonstrates the teacher’s endorsement of the resources. It particularly mentions that these resources stood out as being more effective than other material published on the DfE’s Educate Against Hate website.*
- (7) Testimonial from ACT  
*This is from the CEO at ACT and confirms the role of Middlesex University as outlined in this case study, and confirms that the research we produced has supported ACT’s subsequent work.*