

**An Investigation of Secondary School Teachers' Perceptions and
Experiences of Moral Education in England**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree
of Doctor of Philosophy**

By

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to investigate the perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers regarding moral education in English schools. The literature presents varying theories and arguments on the definition and role of moral education, which is generally believed to encompass values, virtues, and character development, as well as societal codes, the promotion of the common good, and the cultivation of autonomy. While most research has focused on the viewpoints of inexperienced trainee teachers regarding to their understanding and experience in teaching moral education, there is limited research raising the voices of experienced teachers. The purpose of this thesis is to fill this gap by investigating the perspectives and experiences of in-service teachers from across the curriculum subjects.

The data was collected through qualitative online semi-structured interviews with a stimulus material embedded showing current English policy requirements. By the utilisation of this material I aimed to open up discussions and make the data collection process more effective. In total, eighteen secondary school teachers were recruited through snowball approach from a variety of subject areas including religious education, English, physical education, maths, science, modern foreign languages, and other humanities subjects. The data were analysed using NVivo software and a reflexive thematic analysis approach. The themes identified from the analysis were developed through an inductive process. This research also aims to contribute the methodological literature by the use of stimulus material embedded in online interviews to enhance the data collection process besides its contribution to the existing literature on moral education.

The primary objective of this study is three-fold. First, it explores teachers' opinions on moral education, both in relation to and regardless of government policies of SMSC, PSHE, citizenship, FBVs, RHSE, and character education, using the perspective of policy enactment theory. Second, it focuses on teachers' awareness of their roles and responsibilities as outlined by government policies, including Teachers' Standards, ITT Core Content Framework, Early Career Framework, Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook, and Education Inspection Framework, with emphasis on their personal and professional development experiences. Finally, the study assesses the potential contributions of various curriculum disciplines to the moral education of students, using the Jubilee Centre's four-dimensional taxonomy of character education given its emphasis on the cultivation of moral, intellectual, performance, and civic virtues.

The findings of the data show that teachers' perceptions of the concept of moral education was affected by the related policies rather than the theories of it. All participants know the policies of

SMSC, PSHE, citizenship, FBVs, RHSE, and character education, and they implement these policies fully or partially within their form or PSHE courses, their subject areas, or the extracurricular activities within their school settings. However, policies related to their professional development, including the Teachers' Standards, ITT Core content framework, Early Career framework, and Ofsted's Inspection Frameworks, do not appear to affect their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The study also found a lack of initial teacher education and continuing professional development programs focused on moral education, and most teachers expressed a need for such programs to improve their teaching practices. Regarding to the roles of subject areas in providing moral education, it was found that while humanities subjects such as Religious Education play a crucial role in developing moral virtues, civic virtues can be fostered through various subject areas like history and English, and intellectual and performance virtues through science education, literature, arts, drama, and physical education. In sum, the study emphasizes that character education is not limited to a particular subject area but should be an integral part of the curriculum of all subjects. This study provides multiple unique contributions to the body of knowledge on moral education and has significant implications for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders invested in promoting moral education within the English education system.

Table of Contents

Contents

Abstract	i
Table of Contents	iii
Acknowledgements	vi
List of Abbreviations	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Rationale Behind the Study	1
Scope of the Study	3
Research Questions	3
Theoretical Framework.....	4
Policy Enactment Theory	4
Professional Development Theory.....	5
Four-dimensional Taxonomy of Character Building	5
Aims of the Study	6
Significance of the Study.....	7
Organisation of the Chapters.....	7
Chapter 2: Literature Review	9
Introduction	9
Moral Education: Theories and Implications for Policy	10
Theory and policy: 1940s to 1970s	10
Theory and policy: 1970s to 1990s	11
Theory and policy: 1990s to 2020s	14
Teachers' Roles and Training Regarding Moral Education	20
Policy expectations for teachers in England relative to moral education	20
Professional development theory.....	28
The role of Subject areas	32
Religious Education (RE)	32
Moral Education as A Discrete Subject	35
Taxonomies of Character Education	44
Conclusion.....	48
Chapter 3: Methodology	51

Introduction	51
Research Questions and Objectives.....	51
Research Paradigm	53
The interpretive paradigm	54
Research Design	57
Instruments.....	57
Sampling and Participants.....	59
Process	61
Trustworthiness	62
Ethical Considerations.....	64
Analysis	65
Conclusion.....	66
Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion: Teachers’ Perceptions of Moral Education and Enactment of Regarding Policies	67
Introduction	67
Teachers’ Understandings of Moral Education independent of Policy Requirements.....	68
Teaching Christian (religious) morals.....	68
Development of Autonomy (Moral Reasoning and Values Clarification).....	69
Teaching shared values and promoting social cohesion	70
Character building.....	72
Impact of Policies on Teachers’ Understanding of Moral Education.....	73
Teachers’ understanding and experiences of Moral Education Policies	74
Summary	94
Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion: Teachers’ Role and Training	96
Introduction	96
Teachers’ Understanding of Their Role and Responsibilities in Relation to Moral Education	96
Teachers’ Professional Development (CPDs & ITE programmes).....	101
Teachers’ Development of Understanding of Moral Education	106
Teacher’s Professional Development Needs for Moral Education	108
Summary	112
Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion: The Role of Subject Areas	115
Introduction	115
Building Blocks of Character	115
Moral virtues.....	116
Civic virtues	121

Intellectual virtues	123
Performance virtues.....	125
The School Ethos and Ways of Cultivating Virtues	128
Character Caught	129
Character Taught.....	131
Character Sought	133
Summary	135
Chapter 7: Conclusion of the thesis.....	137
Introduction	137
Understanding Moral Education Policy	137
Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities	139
Role of Subject Areas	140
Contribution to knowledge.....	142
Implications for Policy and Practice.....	146
Policy	146
Practice.....	147
Limitations	149
Further Research.....	150
References.....	152
Appendices.....	175
Appendix 1: Statement of Values in NC 1999 (DfE, 1999).....	175
Appendix 2: Interview Guide	178
Appendix 3: Themes Emerged and Sample Coding	181
Appendix 4: Email for Potential Participants	183
Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet	184
Appendix 6: Consent Form.....	187
Appendix 7: Ethics Approval Letter.....	189
Appendix 8: Stimulus Material.....	190
Appendix 9: Participants' Demographics.....	196
Appendix 10: Sample Transcript	197
Appendix 11: Four-dimensional taxonomy for Character Education in schools	206
Appendix 12: TABLE 1: Official Documents & Requirements For teachers (Extended version).....	207

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List of Abbreviations

B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007-2010)
DES	Department for Education and Science (1964-1992)
DFE	Department for Education (1992-1995)
DfE	Department for Education (2010- ongoing)
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment (1995-2001)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ECF	Early Career Framework
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EIF	Education Inspection Framework
ERA	Education Reform Act (1988)
FBVs	Fundamental British Values
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GTP	Graduate Teacher Programme
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationary Office
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
ITTCCF	Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework
JTP	John Templeton Foundation
KS3	Key Stage 3, ages 11-14, year 7-9
KS4	Key Stage 4, ages 14-16, year 10,11
LEA	Local Education Authority

MA	Master of Arts
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
NC	National Curriculum
NCC	National Curriculum Council (1988 ERA)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQT	Newly Qualified Teachers
OFSTED	Office for Standards for Education, Children's services and Skills
PE	Physical Education
PGCE	Post-Graduate Certificate of Education
PSHE	Personal Social Health and Economics education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
RE	Religious Education
SIH	School Inspection Handbook
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMSC	Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural Education
UK	United Kingdom

Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate secondary school teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education in English schools. The study seeks to determine the educators' understanding of moral education, their attitudes towards government policies related to students' moral development, their understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding moral education, and their experiences with teaching moral education within their subject areas, if applicable.

The opening of this chapter commences with an exposition of the justification for conducting this study including the personal and professional background of the researcher delineated. The research questions and objectives are then explored, followed by the presentation of its significance. The chapter concludes with a detailed outline of the organization and structure of the thesis.

Rationale Behind the Study

As a Religious Education (RE) teacher in Turkey for four years, I noticed that teachers often expect RE teachers to be primarily responsible for teaching morals and values. Initially, I believed this to be due to the fact that I was working in a faith school, but after speaking with colleagues from my university and reading various resources on religious education and teaching morals and values, I found that this expectation was present in many schools, regardless of their religious character. This realization sparked my interest in the field of teaching morals and values, and I decided to pursue further research in this area.

In 2016, I came to the United Kingdom to pursue an MA degree in Religious Education at University College London (UCL) and began researching the role of religious education in teaching values. While researching, I came across a number of books and articles on religious education, values education, and the potential role of religious education in teaching morals and values. However, most of these works were theoretical and the perspectives of RE teachers barely studied. Additionally, in 2014, the UK government released guidance on "Fundamental British Values" (FBVs), which advised all schools to promote these values as part of their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) curriculum (DfE, 2014). As a result, values education and teaching British values were particularly relevant topics at the time, and I decided to conduct my MA research on the topic of values education in RE context.

My MA research, entitled "Does Religious Education Have a Distinctive Contribution to Values Education?" was an empirical study that surveyed 44 RE teachers and conducted follow-up interviews with 8 teachers. The study found that participant RE teachers in the UK are also expected to teach values in their classes, and that RE provides an appropriate context for doing so due to its subject

content. However, I also noted that students often learn morals and values from their relationships with teachers, regardless of the subject being taught. As a result, I decided to continue my academic journey and pursue a doctoral degree at Brunel University London in 2018 to further research the perspectives of teachers from different subjects on the moral development of students.

Prior to commencing the design of my research, I engaged in a thorough examination of the literature pertaining to theories of moral, values, and character education, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Additionally, I reviewed existing empirical research in these areas and discovered that there is a limited number of studies that have sought to elicit the perspectives of teachers on moral, values, and character education. The studies that I encountered were mainly conducted in specific schools (such as Pike, 2010) or with student teachers (such as Revell and Arthur, 2007). I also came across research exploring the understanding and experiences of practicing teachers in relation to teaching values (such as Thornberg and Oguz, 2016), but these studies were not conducted in a UK context. After reviewing a considerable number of works, I reflected on my own experiences as a teacher and realized that I had not received any formal training on how to teach morals or values, and my knowledge of moral education was limited to the activities that I had implemented in my classroom with the guidance of my school's head teacher. My understanding of moral education was mainly based on the requirements established by government policies and the directives provided by my school's management and head teacher. Given my desire to investigate teachers' understanding and practices of moral education, I approached my research design with the perspective of a practising teacher and decided to use the context of the government policies and recommendations pertaining to the moral development of students in England instead of solely focusing on the theories of moral education and conducting a comparative study on theory and practice.

Since the central aim of this research is to explore the secondary school teachers' perceptions and experiences with regards to moral education in England, the theories of moral education and the government's expectations of teachers' roles and responsibilities are of significance in this research. The expectations placed on teachers encompass the general educational policies relating to the moral development of students, such as SMSC and PSHE, the Teachers' Standards and Early Careers and ITT Core Content Frameworks, and the objectives of the National Curriculum in both a general and subject-specific capacity. Consequently, given the focus of this study on these key points, its design is divided into three distinct parts.

The second chapter of this thesis provides an overview of the theories of moral education and the historical progression of policy developments in the English education system with the emphasis placed on the potential impact of these theories on the policies in place. In addition, as the scope of

this study is teachers and their experiences in teaching moral education in English context, this research adopts government policies related to the moral development of children as part of moral education, thereby providing a common basis for discussion among teachers. Upon conducting an examination of the historical evolution of policies, it was found that several policies remain relevant in contemporary times, including Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural, Mental and Physical Education (SMSC), Personal, Social, Health, and Economics Education (PSHE), Citizenship Education, Fundamental British Values (FBVs), Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RHSE), and Character Education. From here on, these policies will be referred to as moral education policies in this study.

As the experiences of teachers play a crucial role in this study, the second part examines the roles and responsibilities of teachers including consideration of the official documents of Teachers' Standards, the Early Careers and ITT Core Content Frameworks, the objectives of the National Curriculum in its general and subject-specific aspects, and the Ofsted Inspection framework. Moreover, as this is an empirical study, the previous research asking teachers' experiences of these policies during their teacher education programmes are significant as well. Therefore, this research wants to investigate whether teachers have received any training to teach the prementioned policies or moral education in general. If so, how effective they find the training in their teaching experience.

The final part examines the potential contributions of various subject areas to moral development of the students. The teachers' perceptions and experiences of the role of their subject area and other areas will be considered to find out whom they see as responsible for moral education.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the perspectives of secondary school teachers teaching a diverse range of subject areas, including Mathematics, Science, English, Modern Foreign Languages, Physical Education, and Humanities subjects such as Religious Education, History, Psychology, and Sociology, in England. As this research was conducted online, participants were recruited through a snowball sampling method, without any specific requirements regarding the location or type of school they were employed in.

Research Questions

The overarching question of this research is: *What are the perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers in England regarding the teaching of moral education?*

Followed by three additional questions formulated considering the concepts of this research:

RQ1. How do teachers understand moral education both regardless of and regarding to the government policies, and how they implement these policies in their practice?

R.Q.2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their role and responsibilities in the moral education of students, and how do they consider the effectiveness of their professional development experiences related to teaching moral education?

R.Q.3. What potential contributions could different subject areas make to the students' moral development?

Theoretical Framework

This research will utilize three separate theoretical frameworks to address the three distinct research questions. Specifically, policy enactment theory will be employed to analyse teachers' experiences of teaching moral education policies, professional development theory will be utilized to gain an understanding of teachers' pre-service and in-service education experiences as professionals, and the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education will be utilized to explore the potential contributions of various subject areas to students' character development.

Policy Enactment Theory

The present study employed Ball's policy enactment theory as a theoretical framework to analyse the data regarding teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education policies. Stephen Ball's policy enactment theory is a comprehensive conceptual framework that elucidates the implementation of policies in intricate organizational contexts like educational institutions. According to Ball, Maguire, and Braun (2012), the implementation of policies is not a linear and hierarchical procedure, but rather a multifaceted and interactive process that involves diverse agents and variables at different levels of the educational institution.

Ball's policy enactment theory provides a nuanced and dynamic understanding of policy enactment process. It illustrates the complex interactions between multiple actors and factors at different levels of educational institutions and how these interactions shape the ways in which policies are actually implemented in practice. Using Ball's policy enactment theory as a theoretical lens, enabled me to understand the complex interactions between multiple actors and factors at different levels of the institution and how these interactions shape the ways in which policies are actually enacted by the teachers. The study aims to examine the teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the moral education policies as these factors may influence their comprehension of the concept of moral education through the lens of policy enactment theory.

Professional Development Theory

In the realm of education, educators are commonly categorized as technicians, craft workers, or professionals, as argued by Orchard and Winch (2015). In light of significant transformations in teacher training, it is crucial to consider the most effective approaches to prepare teachers for their challenging yet fulfilling responsibilities (Orchard and Winch, 2015). Oancea and Orchard (2012) contend that conventional methods of preparing teachers have been subject to scrutiny, necessitating innovative training initiatives that enhance the quality of education.

Orchard and Winch (2015) propose that initial teacher education (ITE) programs should aim to equip aspiring teachers with the professional development theory, which is characterized by more than technical and subject knowledge. The theory mandates that educators possess an in-depth understanding of educational concepts, an awareness of the debates surrounding aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced educational practices, and an ability to engage with educational research. Additionally, teachers must exhibit strong ethical reasoning skills to effectively navigate ethical decision-making challenges in the classroom.

This research also endeavours to investigate the experiences of secondary school teachers in pre-service and in-service education to ascertain whether moral education and ethical reflection were incorporated into their training programs. The professional development theory will be utilized in analysing and discussing the results pertaining to teachers' comprehension of their responsibilities and experiences with both initial and ongoing education initiatives.

Four-dimensional Taxonomy of Character Building

The historical overview discussed in this study sheds light on the many philosophical theories of moral education that have been proposed. Notwithstanding its philosophical underpinnings, character education has emerged as the most systematic and all-encompassing approach to moral education, as asserted by Lickona (1991). Of particular note, the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education could prove to be a valuable framework for incorporating character education into various subject areas, given its emphasis on the cultivation of moral, intellectual, performance, and civic virtues.

The present study will adopt the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education as a theoretical framework for examining teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the possible contributions of different subject areas to students' moral education. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues is a prominent research organization specializing in character education in the United Kingdom. In light

of the Jubilee Centre's innovative contributions to character education within the United Kingdom, their taxonomy will be employed as a model for exploring various aspects of the four-dimensional taxonomy.

Aims of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to augment the existing body of educational research literature with novel insights into the practical aspects of moral education. To that end, this study endeavours to make an empirical contribution to the field of moral education from the perspectives of in-service teachers in secondary schools by focusing on their perception and implementation of moral education and related policies, by considering their personal and professional development regarding moral education, and by exploring the potential contributions of different subject areas in teaching moral education.

In addition, as the scope of this study is teachers and their experiences in teaching moral education in English context, this research adopts government policies related to the moral development of children as part of moral education, thereby providing a common basis for discussion among teachers. The framework of moral education policies in this study encompasses spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education (SMSC), personal, social, health, and economics education (PSHE), citizenship education, fundamental British values (FBV), Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RHSE), and character education. From this perspective, this study represents a pioneering formal endeavour to examine the teachers' reflections on the policies concerning the moral development of students, thereby making a distinctive contribution to the field. Moreover, as the policy expectations relating to moral development are applicable to all teachers and schools regardless of subject area or type of school, this study aims to find out the role of various subject areas in promoting the moral development of students.

Finally, besides teachers' experiences of teaching moral education, this research wants to investigate whether teachers have received any training to teach the prementioned policies or moral education in general. If so, how effective they find the training in their teaching experience. This study endeavours to make a significant contribution to both the policy development and implementation processes and the educational research literature through examination of the teachers' perceptions and experiences. By doing so, it aims to provide valuable insights that can inform and guide these processes.

Significance of the Study

This research aims to make two significant contributions to the literature.

Firstly, despite the pivotal role played by teachers in education, their perceptions and experiences have been largely overlooked in the existing literature, with the majority of research having focused on student teachers. This study aims to address this gap in the literature by conducting an inquiry into the perceptions and experiences of service teachers with respect to moral education. Additionally, this study does not restrict its scope to a single or a group of subject areas. Instead, it seeks to gather knowledge and experiences of teachers across different subject areas in the secondary school level, encompassing key stages 3 and 4, within the context of England. Additionally, this study represents a pioneering effort to investigate the understanding and implementation of policies related to moral education by secondary school teachers in the British educational agenda. Therefore, this study aims to make a contribution to the literature within the field of educational research by exploring various aspects.

Secondly, this is qualitative research using semi-structured interviews as the method of data collection. However, given the Covid-19 restrictions and remote teaching, the research designed online. Hence, in order to enhance the data gathering the researcher designed stimulus material as interactive material including the policies framed in this research with the aim of finding a common ground for discussion about moral education in teachers' practices. While this method has been utilized in other research fields (see Rowsell, 2011, for example), this study represents a pioneering effort in the use of stimulus material as part of an online interview process in the educational field. Thus, this study also aspires to contribute to the methodological literature in the field of education.

Organisation of the Chapters

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters, with a brief overview of each chapter provided below.

Chapter 1 begins with an explanation of the rationale behind this study, including a description of the personal and professional context in which the study was undertaken. The research questions and objectives are then examined, followed by a discussion of its significance. The chapter ends with a guide to the thesis.

Chapter 2 delves into the historical literature and is comprised of three distinct sections. The first section provides a summary of the theories of moral education and the evolution of policy developments in the English educational sphere, with a focus on the potential impact of these theories

on policies. As the practices of teachers are a central aspect of this study, the second section concentrates on the roles and responsibilities of teachers as prescribed by the government, including the Teachers Standards, the Early Career Framework, and the requirements of Ofsted. The final section of the chapter examines the potential contributions of subject areas, with a specific examination of Religious Education (RE), English, and Physical Education (PE) as representative examples of the requirements and subject-specific histories related to the moral development of students.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to exploring the methodology employed in this study. It examines the underlying research philosophy and provides an analysis of the design of the research instrument and its application. Furthermore, the chapter details the procedures utilized to collect and analyse the data, considering any ethical considerations involved. The present research is structured as a qualitative inquiry aimed at obtaining comprehensive insights from teachers. The study utilizes semi-structured interviews, supplemented by stimulus material, as the primary data collection method. Owing to the limitations imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant remote teaching, the research was carried out online.

Chapter 4, 5, and 6 presents the key findings of the study by comparing or referencing the existing literature. The design of the chapters is based on the research questions which follows the similar structure with the Chapter 2. **Chapter 4** examines the teachers' perceptions of moral education regarding and regardless of the government policies of SMSC, PSHE, Citizenship, FBVs, RHSE, and Character Education, through the lens of policy enactment theory. **Chapter 5** concentrates on the teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities as defined by the government, encompassing the policies of Teachers' Standards, ITT Core Content Framework, Early Career Framework, Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook and Education Inspection Framework with the focus of their personal and professional development experiences. **Chapter 6** evaluates the potential contributions of different subjects within the curriculum to the moral education of students through the lens of Jubilee Centre's four-dimensional taxonomy of character education.

Chapter 7 serves as a brief recap of the significant discoveries made in the research and offers recommendations for policy and practice in the context of secondary education. The chapter also examines the interconnection between the major themes and the existing literature and theoretical frameworks. Additionally, chapter seven emphasizes the study's contribution to the present body of knowledge and identifies its limitations. Finally, it presents the author's perspective on the limitations of the study and proposes potential research opportunities in the area of moral education in secondary education.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Moral education has been a part of the curriculum in England for centuries, with the goal of teaching students' values, morals, ethical behaviours, and character traits. The specific policies and approaches -philosophical and psychological- to the moral development of the students have evolved over time, influenced by various social, cultural, and political factors. Initially, moral education was seen as part of religious education with the aim of teaching Christian values. Subsequently, following the conclusion of World War II, the restructuring of English society led to a shift in the focus of education towards a more secular and inclusive approach to moral education, emphasizing the promotion of values such as tolerance, respect, and an appreciation for the diversity of cultures, races, and religions, which are still among the aims of current policies in the British agenda.

Since the central aim of this research is to explore secondary school teachers' perceptions and experiences with regard to moral education in England, the theories of moral education and the government's expectations of teachers' roles and responsibilities are significant in this research. The expectations placed on teachers encompass the general educational policies relating to the moral development of students. Consequently, given the focus of this study on these key points, the design of this chapter is divided into three distinct parts.

The first section of this chapter presents a summarization of moral education theories and the progression of policy developments in the English education system, with a particular emphasis on the potential effect of these theories on policies. Upon consideration of the historical evolution of policies, I discovered that the following policies remain valid in present times: Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural, Mental and Physical Education (SMSC), Personal, Social, Health, and Economics Education (PSHE), Citizenship Education, Fundamental British Values (FBVs), Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RHSE), and Character Education. Since the practices of teachers are one of the central components of this study, the second section considers the roles and responsibilities of teachers as mandated by the government, including the Teachers' Standards and Early Careers and ITT Core Content Frameworks; the objectives of the National Curriculum in both a general and subject-specific capacity; and the Ofsted Inspection frameworks. The final section of the chapter explores the potential contributions of various subject areas, with a specific examination of Religious Education (RE), English, and Physical Education (PE) as representative examples of the requirements for students' moral development.

Moral Education: Theories and Implications for Policy

Historically, moral education has been an integral component of education. It has played an important role in ancient educational traditions such as those of Ancient Greek, Egypt, and Persia, among others (Kaymakcan & Meydan, 2016). Education was designed to assist young people become intelligent and morally good in countries all over the world. More developed societies have made moral instruction an intentional goal of education from the earliest times, and they instructed students to cultivate their characters, manners, virtues and so forth (Lickona, 1991). However, the theories underlying approaches to moral education have evolved over time and continue to evolve. In this section, the history of the theories of moral education and their impact on the political agenda in English context will be considered.

Theory and policy: 1940s to 1970s

Prior to the nineteenth century, education in the Muslim and Western Christian worlds was religiously centred, therefore values were taught according to religious principles (Bazarkulov, 2008). During the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, anti-religious sentiments and reactions were prevalent. Due to the Enlightenment movement in Europe and other places, the structure of the societies started to evolve from their religious and doctrine-based to more secular and plural one, and the social and political changes were followed by the changes of intellectual and ethical perspectives (Carr, 1999, p. 30). Darwin, Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche's theories influenced intellectual writers and leaders, who had a great deal of interest in the church-state separation theory (Ryan, 2012; Kaymakcan & Meydan, 2016). At least in some locations, not only in Protestant countries but also among where Catholic Christianity was still the prevalent religion, the Reformation shook up established notions of religious moral authority. This resulted in the increase of individual *liberty of conscience*, which in turn contributed to the rise of increasingly secular notions about the nature of moral and evaluative discourse (Carr, 1999, p. 30).

After the Second World War, most of the educational philosophy and theory began to focus on a more liberal and secular education in a diverse society (Carr, 1999, p. 32). After 1960s, philosophers from Britain, mainly R. S. Peters from London Institute of Education, and US contributed this new liberalist theory aiming to the development of the autonomy as a main aim of education (Carr, 1999, p.32). As per the tenets of this theory, educational institutions ought to nurture individuals' cognitive abilities and expertise, enabling them to independently determine how to lead their lives, identify their aspirations, determine their production and consumption preferences, and make informed decisions in social, spiritual, and economic spheres (Carr, 1999). Furthermore, the theory maintains that

educational institutions should refrain from any attempts at indoctrination that may impinge upon an individual's freedom to live and pursue their goals. (Carr, 1999). Thus, separation of moral education from religious education become one of the main discussion points in education. Paul Hirst, for example, argues that in a secular and plural society education and the moral development of the students must be free from religious doctrines (Hirst, 1974).

In Britain, although some philosophers were arguing the secularisation of education (see Peters, 1981; Hirst, 1974), the debates around and the policies of education were focusing on compulsory religious education (RE) and collective worship that was suggested in *Educational Reconstruction* Whitepaper (1943) and later became legislation with 1944 Education Act. In 1943, *Educational Reconstruction* Whitepaper articulated that people, not only those in Churches, wanted to see religious education in a much greater place in schools to review the spiritual and personal values in British society and the national tradition. The paper also suggested that collective worship, which had already been part of most schools at that time, must be compulsory in schools (Louden, 2004, p. 276). Followingly, with the 1944 Education Act, collective worship (school 'assemblies') and RE became compulsory with the parent's rights to '*withdraw their children from religious worship or instruction*' (Education Act 1944, 25 (1), (2), (4)). Also, the 1944 Act stated that the local education authorities (LEAs) should '*contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental, and physical development of the community by securing that efficient education*' (Education Act 1944, (7)), that means all schools, from curriculum design to school activities (inside and outside), are expected to support moral development of the students in the school settling. However, LEAs were main authorities to develop the curriculum and how they meet these aims was relative. The only ubiquitous place for moral education in British schools seems to be RE, as it become statutory. Since, at that time in Britain, Christianity and democracy were seen as *natural partners*, and the aim of RE was to teach Christianity and its morals as stated in the Plowden Report (DES, 1967; Kay, 1981). Therefore, it is quite clear to articulate that secularisation or development of autonomy were not present in British education agenda in this period; the changes in the education policies were not about the secularisation of education but was about a shift from Anglican doctrines to Christianity and its moral principles (DES, 1967).

Theory and policy: 1970s to 1990s

Towards the middle of the twentieth century, *personalism* began to be explored, which emphasised the value, dignity, and independence of the individual, and the focus of people is changed to issues like the civil rights movement, women's rights, and many aspects of respecting children as individuals (Lickona, 1991). Around the 1970s, besides philosophers, psychologists, and politicians were interested in the study of values in education. There were two psychological approaches as an

alternative to the traditional moral education with an individualist spirit of the time (Lickona, 1993). The first one is Kohlberg's (1981) developmental model of moral education that aims to develop individuals' moral reasoning abilities to be able to make their own judgements about which values to hold through moral dilemma discussions. The second one is Values Clarification movement, developed by Raths, Harmin, and Simon (1966), that aims to enable individuals to discover their own thoughts and feelings and gain awareness of their own values (see Lickona, 1993; Kaymakcan & Meydan, 2016).

Lawrence Kohlberg is one of the most important names in liberal moral theory from a psychological perspective. Similar with Piaget's stages of human development (Piaget, 1947), he believes that moral development has stages too and the aim of education is to be of assisting individuals through those stages (Kohlberg, 1981). Kohlberg describes six stages of development that could be the framework of moral education (Power, 1989) starting from the stage of rule following, stages 1 and 2, then the level of compliance with the social rules, stages 3 and 4, and ending with the final post conventional level, stages 5 and 6, where morality is characterised with universally applicable abstract principles and values (Sanders, 2022). The final stage is where individuals are able to reason self-chosen ethical principles that are abstract and universal; but not all individuals achieve this level. (Kohlberg, 1981; Carr, 1999, p.32; Sanders, 2022). Kohlberg's most important contribution to moral education was the just community approach (Power, 1989) that aims to support the moral development of individuals, mainly moral reasoning skills, and of society with the emphasis on universal values like justice, equality and democracy (Akbas, 2008). Kohlberg suggested teachers to become community advocates in democratic gatherings by challenging pupils to commit to sustaining common values of caring, trust, and communal responsibility (Power, 1989). He maintained that the adoption of the just community approach was vital not only for nurturing moral development but also for fostering a democratic sense of civic engagement in a society that had become excessively preoccupied with personal interests (Power, 1989).

Meanwhile, Raths and co-workers introduced the values clarification approach that aims to help individuals clarify their subjective set of values. According to this approach, individuals need to become aware of their beliefs, thoughts, and values through an exploration and clarification process with the methods of selection, rewarding and practice (Raths et al, 1966; Kaymakcan & Meydan, 2016).

After 1970s, Kohlberg's moral reasoning theory and Values Clarification approaches become popular with the emphasis of the *individual's* beliefs, thoughts and values, and the emphasis on the autonomy increased. Similarly, in Britain, R. S. Peter's arguments on the notion of education, the understanding of the aims of education evolved from '*training, instruction, conditioning, and indoctrination*' to

bringing up morally autonomous students who can make *rational value-judgements* (Kay, 1981). Additionally, the works of John Wilson (1972, 1973) and Peter McPhail (1972) illustrate a parallel transition in the educational paradigm, wherein there is an emphasis on fostering students' moral reasoning abilities to facilitate their autonomous development.

However, the practice was slightly different from the theories. Although the liberal ideals of free-market economy, competition, privatization, and individual liberty found their places on the educational agenda in Britain, the emphasis on traditional moral values, especially Christian values, remained the same, and besides, instead of secular values, the values of world religions were introduced to the agenda. According to Forrester and Garratt (2016), these changes resemble a marriage of neoliberal and neoconservative ideals and the birth of the New Right ideology.

Around 1970s, due to the economic crises all over the world and so Britain, the discussions about education were centred around the aim of it as preparing the students for the workplace to reduce the unemployment rates (Forrester and Garratt, 2016). After mid-70s, there was a call for education reform requiring more involvement of the state in shaping the curriculum and reducing the power of LEAs (Forrester and Garratt, 2016). Furthermore, around 1980s, due to the increasing number of immigrants the population in Britain started to become plural and the new multicultural structure raise new issues about education (Kay, 1981). Especially the Christian nature of RE was reconstructed to the systematic introduction of the world religions as Britain started to become a multicultural society and Christianity was not the only religion of the society anymore (Hand, 2004, p. 155). However, RE's role of the promotion of moral development remained same until the end of 1980s, although there were some attempts to separate morality from religion (Hand, 2004, p. 155).

In 1988, Education Reform Act (ERA) was introduced by Conservative government, in leadership of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, empowering the Secretary state for Education in creation of centrally defined National Curriculum for state-maintained schools, establishing Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs), and establishing League Tables (Forrester and Garratt, 2016), which introduced free market individualism and competition in education (Kerr, 2003). Regarding to the moral development of the students, 1988 ERA advised all maintained schools and LEAs to promote *'the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society: and preparing such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life'* (HMSO, 1988, (1)). Also, there was a change from the aim of RE from instilling Christian virtues to an invite to exploration of world religions, especially the religions of immigrants, and Christian national culture (Hand, 2004). However, although this advice seems to consider the moral development of the students, the explanation of what consist of this individual and societal development targets and how to promote those was

absent. Furthermore, it seems that the RE and Collective Worship were the only places where schools could promote these *spiritual and moral development* goals (Hand, 2004, p. 156).

In 1992, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) was established by conservative government, which has two significant impacts I want to consider. First, the main role of Ofsted is to inspect schools whether they meet the requirements of NC to raise the quality and standards of education. Second, after the creation of Ofsted, spiritual moral social and cultural education (SMSC) became part of school inspections (Peterson *et al.*, 2014). Thus, the moral development of children became a compulsory component of the schooling process, with the goal of producing good, purposeful, and wise individuals who have a clear understanding of what it means to be human and the kind of society which allows it (Hansard 2006 in Peterson *et al.*, 2014). While the former looks like increasing individualism and competition, the latter point seems to consider the community cohesion as well as individual development with the focus of social and cultural education, which is parallel to arguments of the moral education theories. Although there was not any reflection of Kohlbergian moral reasoning or Values clarification movements in the British context, the marks of transition from the individualistic liberal idea to the consideration of social cohesion and other people's beliefs, thoughts, and values besides individual moral development catch the eye.

Theory and policy: 1990s to 2020s

Around 1990s, personalism begun to decline with the criticisms of both approaches and social cohesion and shared values started to be emphasised. Haydon (2006), for example, argues that abstract reasoning or clarification of values are insufficient for values education as it only increases diversity and hinders social cohesion. Schools need to play a crucial role in encouraging students to investigate the values and norms of society and to form their own moral judgments to learn how to co-exist. Also, Haydon (2006) and Halstead (2005) argues that what is right and/or wrong (or good and bad) could be subjective or objective, relative or absolute. Some values may be relative to cultures or traditions while others are absolute or universal and apply to all people regardless of time or place (Halstead, 2005). So, as well as individual reasoning or clarification of values, beliefs, and thoughts, moral development of the students also requires knowing, understanding, and respecting other people's choices.

In the 1990s, a new character education movement emerged bringing "good character" back to its historical place as the most important moral goal of schools (Lickona, 1993) with the criticisms of Kohlberg's stages of moral development and values clarification approaches. Kilpatrick (1993) and Lickona (1991, 1993) argues that instead of abstract moral reasoning and rise of personal preferences,

students need to develop sound moral habits, namely character traits. Lickona (1993) finds Kohlberg's moral reasoning as insufficient for good character although necessary; and Values Clarification as not being able to differentiate between personal preferences (*a matter of free choice*) and moral values (*a matter of obligation*), although he finds their methodology rich. Alternative to these approaches, Lickona (1993) emphasised that a return to character education is needed which can cover *cognitive* (knowing the good), *affective* (desiring the good) and *behavioural* (doing the good) *aspects of morality*. Similarly, Halstead and McLaughlin (1999) put character education as an opposition to Kohlberg's and Raths et al's approaches, accuse the former as devoting excessive prominence to the formation of abstract reasoning regarding moral principles and the latter as being relativist. Despite having similar criticisms, Kristjansson (2002), member of the Jubilee Centre and editor of Journal of Moral Education, raises more philosophical points and calls both approaches as moral formalists influenced by Kantian rights-based liberalism focusing on the forms (procedures and principles) of morality instead of the content and assuming that moral reasoning should be neutral and free from emotions regarding to other forms of the 'good' (Kristjansson, 2002, p.140-141). He then put the moral substantivism inspired by J. S. Mill's utility-based morality in support of moral naturalism as an opposition to moral formalism (Kristjansson, 2002, p.140-141). While the former paying attention to the rational process of moral development (*how to teach*), the latter focuses on the content of the transmission of *moral truths* through character education (*what to teach*) (Kristjansson, 2002, p. 139). Kristjansson (2002) states that the latter kind is what character educationist desires and argues that there are two versions of moral substantivism, expansive character education (ECE) and non-expansive character education (NECE). While ECE aiming to cultivate expansive set of perspectivist virtues- religious based character education, civic education and liberationist pedagogy-, NECE aims to promote secular morality by focusing on transcultural and universal fundamental virtues and values including honesty, compassion, self-respect, and kindness (Kristjansson, 2002). Kristjansson finalises his argument by articulating that NECE is the better way of teaching values among others as human beings cannot survive without a *minimal set of common virtues* regardless of their background and concludes that schools need to take an active role in teaching these common virtues.

Although, there are different arguments on what constitutes a good character, what should be the conception of character education, which values or virtues should be promoted in schools, and how (see Halstead and McLaughlin, 1999; Jubilee Centre, 2012; Kisby, 2017; Kristjansson 2002/2), the main aim of the character education is to develop the good and positive character strengths to help students to act for 'right reasons' and to make intelligent and ethical autonomous decisions in complex circumstances in the way of flourishing of the individuals and society (Jubilee Centre, 2012). Therefore, character education is form of education that attempts to foster students' emotional and social

development; the aim of education is not only focusing on the students' academic performance but also on their attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, values, and virtues; their characters (Kisby, 2017).

According to Lickona (1991), character education is the most organized and comprehensive approach to moral education. I concur with this argument and consider it a practical theoretical framework for my research in analysing teachers' experiences of teaching moral education in their subject areas. As such, I will employ character education as one of the key theoretical frameworks in this study. Therefore, various taxonomies and approaches to character education will be expounded within the third section of this chapter which focuses on the potential contributions of different subject areas in moral education.

In Britain, the New Labour ideology, characterized by the Third Way, took over governance in 1997 with a modernization agenda (Forrester and Garratt, 2016) that aimed to adopt practical methods from other countries while balancing European values of social democracy and inclusion with employment-focused labour markets of the United States (Hodgson and Spours, 1999, p. 8). The education agenda was dominated by issues such as the Human Rights Act, multiculturalism, immigration, and standardization of education (Onal, 2017).

In 1999, National Curriculum Handbook for Teachers was published with the aims and values for schools to consider while developing their curriculum, including the aims regarding to *spiritual, moral, social, cultural* (SMSC) education (DfEE and QCA, 1999). This NC and SMSC requirements brought a new perspective to the moral development of the students by including detailed expressions of the aims of SMSC including provision of knowledge, understanding and appreciation of personal and social (shared) values; awareness of equality and diversity; being responsible and caring citizenship; and ability to communicate with each other and work for the community cohesion. Although not statutory, the handbook also included personal, social, health, and economic education (PSHE) and citizenship education frameworks for schools with the purpose of enabling students to develop confident, healthy, independent lives and '*become informed, active, responsible citizens*' (DfEE and QCA, 1999). Also, citizenship aims to address identity, diversity, and cohesion and motivate children and youth to engage more in their schools and communities (Keating et al., 2010). Therefore, it encourages the development of SMSC, in addition to other components of the curriculum (DfEE and QCA, 1999). Then, a framework for sex and relationship education embedded in PSHE was published in 2000 with its aims to support students' physical, emotional, and moral development (DfEE, 2000), which is followed by the inclusion of citizenship education to the NC as compulsory for secondary school students (aged 11-16) in all maintained schools (DfE, 2002).

All these policy changes show that, besides the political ideologies and the social context of the society, the wide spreading approaches of moral education, values education recently, begun to be considered by the education authorities. Although there was no consensus on the values that all can agree on, the NC handbook reproduced the values list declared after an extensive consultation by National Forum for Values in Education and the Community, which was established in 1996 to find out whether there is a common ground for values everyone could agree on in a plural society (Arthur, 2005), ; that shows that the shared values were not exported from somewhere else but created with a deliberation process by the members of the British community (See Appendix 1 for the list). The SMSC development as a whole school approach, PSHE, and citizenship education offer a space for values education in the common schools since they serve as the guiding principles or moral code for the conduct of students (Arweck et al, 2005).

Between 2010 and 2015, Conservative-led Coalition government took over with an emphasis on educational reforms including change of qualification and examination systems in schools, increasing the diversity of school types - especially introduction of Free schools and encouragement of converting Academies- and empowering the charities, parents, and schools over LEAs, and reconsideration the importance of teaching and teacher training (Forrester and Garratt, 2016; Gillard, 2018). The Coalition's education policy is best described as a combination of libertarian and traditional values, continuing the themes of the Conservative governments from 1979 to 1997 (Allen, 2015 in Forrester and Garratt, 2016).

After the terrorist attacks in UK and around the world, the emphasis on community cohesion, diversity and belonging, and national identity appeared in the discussions of politicians. In 2011, in his first speech as prime minister David Cameron expressed reviewing the policy of the Prevent Strategy (2011) to prevent any extremist movements and terrorism (BBC, 2011). Then, he continued his speech by expressing the need to believe and actively promote certain values in a plural society including *'freedom of speech, democracy, the rule of law, and equal rights'* (BBC,2011). Although his speech seemed a call for shared values that can support community cohesion and multiculturalism, it caused division among people as those values were called as British values. Then, in 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) published guidance on promoting Fundamental British Values (FBVs) as part of SMSC, consisting of "democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance with different faiths" to prepare young students for modern life in Britain (DfE, 2014/1, p. 5); which led debates of Britishness and British values (Forrester and Garratt, 2016). Shortly after the FBV was published, the government released a new statutory guidance of National Curriculum (NC) in England for Key stages 1 to 4 replacing the previous one and the FBVs added to the NC as part of SMSC

education. However, although the FBVs were added, the new framework does not include the *values, aims, and purposes* part in the post-2000 NC. The general aims of NC were narrowed down to promoting “the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society” and preparing “pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life” (DfE, 2014/2).

In 2013, the government started promoting ‘What Works’ agenda aiming to improve the policies based on research in line with their modernization policy (Forrester and Garratt, 2016) and What Works Network established (WWN, 2013). Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is one of the members of WWN whose purpose is to provide evidence-based teaching (WWN, 2013). Later, in 2016, in partnership with EEF, the Department for Education published the White paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere* drawing attention to the development of world-leading curriculum that is knowledge-based, well assessed and aiming to build ‘character and resilience’ in all pupils (DfE, 2016). Thus, character education appeared in the education agenda with the description of:

“a set of attitudes, skills, and behaviours – such as self-control, confidence, social skills, motivation, and resilience – that are thought to underpin success in school and beyond. These are also referred to as ‘social and emotional skills’, ‘non-cognitive skills’ or ‘essential life skills’. They include the ability to respond to setbacks, work well with others, build relationships, manage emotions, and cope with difficult situations.” (EEF, 2016).

In 2015, the Conservatives took over the government with the aim of continuing the reforms of the Coalition government with the unchanged focus of equality, accessibility, and opportunity (Forrester and Garratt, 2016). Also, their support for the character education is continued with a support project (with £3,5 million budget) in 2015 that is followed by the non-statutory guidance for the development of schools’ character education programmes (DfE, 2019). According to this new guidance, the purpose of character education is to support promotion of the SMSC and Relationships, Sex, and Health Education by supporting good behaviour and positive character traits such as *respect, truthfulness, courage, courtesy and generosity* (DfE, 2019/1). Followingly, the guidance for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RHSE) published mandating all secondary schools to provide it through their PSHE curriculum including personal attributes of *honesty, integrity, kindness, sense of justice, self-worth, and self-respect* (DfE, 2021) that were previously mentioned as part of SMSC and PSHE programmes.

The Secretaries of State for Education Nicky Morgan (2014-2016) and Damian Hinds (2018-2019) seem to have significant impact in development of those character education policies. Nicky Morgan, who announced the character education support project and later wrote a book about character education

(Morgan, 2017), stated that she was influenced by Birmingham University's Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues and her conversation with Professor James Arthur, director of the centre, and so brought character education as one of the explicit aims of the DfE (Arthur et al., 2015).

According to Allen and Bull (2018), character education is a policy export from the United States that is primarily funded by the John Templeton Foundation (JTF), a neoconservative Christian organisation that runs and funds character education research around the world. With their network ethnography research, Allen and Bull (2018) indicated that the Jubilee Centre was established in the UK with JTF funding with the purpose of conducting interdisciplinary research focusing on character, virtues, and values. Later, Damian Hinds (2019) talked at the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership conference on his plan to assist youngsters in developing character, resilience, and grit by mentioning the bestselling book, 'Grit', of Angela Duckworth who is one of the founders of Character-Lab, a non-profit organisation funded by JTF in US (Allen and Bull, 2018).

All these developments indicates that the theories of moral education, including values and character education, somehow affected the policy development in the UK mostly by the impact of research done in education field and with the support of research organisations as in the final cases of the Education Endowment Foundation and Jubilee Centre. Nonetheless, the influence of political ideologies, particularly neoliberal and neoconservative thoughts, and some social challenges such as immigration and terrorism, cannot be denied. Especially, the release of the Prevent Strategy and Fundamental British Values look like a social interruption in the political agenda. Although there is a clear shift from moral or values education to character education in the terminology, the addition of character education to the agenda is not a replacement for previous policies and the requirements of SMSC, PSHE, Citizenship, FBV, and RHSE are still in force. What is novel is solely the increased emphasis on the cultivation of good character and the flourishing of both individuals and society.

In general, the importance of students' moral development in the English education system has been demonstrated throughout history, often influenced by theories, political ideologies, and social issues. Initially it was supposed to be taught through religious education for a long time, then it became an element or form of moral education in schools as part of SMSC, PSHE, citizenship education, FBV, character education, and RHSE requirements. Although these areas are not specifically referred to as moral education, they share the same assumptions on the moral development of children and the function of education (Revell and Arthur, 2007). Hence, in this research, the term "moral education policies" will be employed to provide clarity to these policies.

Teachers operate within the same societal context, and as such, it is not reasonable to assume that they are unaware of the educational policies and societal changes that impact their work. In light of this, I will utilize the aforementioned policies in the design and framework of this study, with the aim of fostering a deeper discussion of these policies during the interview process and determining the views and experiences of teachers in relation to them. Furthermore, besides these legislative requirements for schools and teachers, the education agenda imposes specific requirements for teachers as well, which will be discussed in the subsequent section.

Teachers' Roles and Training Regarding Moral Education

So far, the history of the theories of moral education and their implications on the British education agenda has been discussed. It was stated that the policies considering moral development of the students would be considered within the framework of moral education in this research which include SMSC, PSHE, FBVs, citizenship, RSHE, and character education. Now is the time to consider the implementation of these policies and to bring the teachers to the forefront, since they are the ones who put theories and policies into practice. This section will examine the official expectations regarding the roles and responsibilities of teachers as moral educators by considering them as professionals regardless of their subject specific knowledge.

Policy expectations for teachers in England relative to moral education

The Teachers' Standards are a set of guidelines that outline the professional duties and expectations for teachers, which was developed by the DfE and set out the knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers are expected to demonstrate to meet the required standards for their profession (DfE, 2011). Due to the fact that the participants in this study are currently practicing teachers, the majority of whom completed their initial teacher education after the year 2000, I chose to examine the versions of the Teachers' Standards beginning in 2006.

Before the introduction of the Teachers' Standards, there were different sets of guidelines and expectations for teachers in England. For example, the standards for newly qualified teachers were published in 2006 by the Department of Education and Skills (DfES, 2006). The document, *Qualifying to Teach*, outlines the values and principles that underpin the teaching profession in England, including a commitment to equality and diversity, the promotion of the welfare and safeguarding of children, continuous professional development, working in partnership with others, promoting high standards of achievement, engaging with research and evidence-based practice, and being a positive role model by demonstrating and promoting "*the positive values, attitudes, and behaviour that they expect from their pupils.*" (DfES, 2006). According to the document, teachers are also required to know and

understand the *values, aims and purposes and the general teaching requirements* in the National Curriculum Handbook and be familiar with the citizenship and PSHE curriculums (DfES, 2006).

In 2007, The Professional Standards for Teachers document was published by the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) the document was divided into three main areas: professional values, professional knowledge, and professional skills, which outline the values and principles, knowledge and understanding, and skills and abilities that teachers are expected to possess in their teaching practice in order to meet the required standards for their profession. The professional values in the document include a commitment to equality and diversity, the promotion of the welfare and safeguarding of children, and a commitment to continuous professional development (TDA, 2007). Teachers were expected to have a good relationship with the students to make sure they achieve their full potential in a *“fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive atmosphere; and to hold positive values and attitudes and adopt high standards of behaviour in their professional role”* (TDA, 2007). In 2008, the document was updated with minor changes, for example, instead of “holding” teachers expected to *“demonstrate” “the positive values, attitudes, and behaviour they expect from children and young people”* (TDA, 2008). There seems to be a shift from passively holding positive attributes to actively representing, in other words, role modelling, although there was no explanation about what constitutes positive values and attitudes or high standards of behaviour. However, these documents do not establish any connection between teachers and their responsibilities as moral educators, beyond serving as good role models for the students.

In 2012, The Teachers' Standards were introduced, following a review of teacher training and professional development, and revised in 2013 and 2021 (DfE, 2012, 2013, 2021). The standards are divided into six areas: planning and preparing for lessons, delivering lessons, assessing, recording, and reporting on pupils' progress, managing pupils' behaviour, professional relationships, and managing resources and the wider curriculum. Teachers in England are expected to demonstrate their professional knowledge and understanding of these areas in their teaching practice, and to continue to develop their skills and knowledge throughout their careers (DfE, 2021). Also, there is a separate section named the Personal and Professional Conduct that outlines the expectations for the behaviour and attitudes of teachers both inside and outside the classroom. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining high standards of ethics and behaviour, treating pupils with dignity and respect, safeguarding their well-being, showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, not undermining fundamental British values, and acting within the statutory frameworks of their professional duties and responsibilities. Teachers are also expected to have proper and professional

regard for the ethos, policies, and practices of the school in which they teach, and to maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality (DfE, 2021).

The DfE designed the ITT Core Content Framework (ITTCCF) (DfE, 2019/6) and Early Career Framework (ECF) (DfE, 2019/4) to support newly qualified teachers (NQTs) as they work towards meeting the Teachers' Standards, and to help ensure that they have the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to be effective in the classroom. Specifically, the ITTCCF and ECF include a set of standards, with 'learn that' and 'learn how to' statements, that NQTs are expected to meet as they progress through the stages of the program. These standards are closely aligned with the Teachers' standards, and NQTs are expected to demonstrate that they are meeting the Teachers' standards as part of the ITTCCF and ECF (DfE, 2019/4/6).

The ECF is also closely linked to the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) used by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) which applies to maintained schools and academies, non-association independent schools, further education and skills providers and early years settings (DfE, 2019/5). The EIF is a framework that Ofsted uses to evaluate the quality of education and care provided in schools and other settings in England. One of the key areas that the EIF assesses is the quality of teaching and learning in a school including the quality of teaching provided by NQTs. Overall, the EIF provides a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of the ECF in supporting the development of NQTs as they begin their teaching careers, and in helping to ensure that all teachers in England have the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to be effective in the classroom. The EIF also includes a section on the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of students assessing how well the school promotes the development of students' values and understanding of ethical and moral issues. Inspectors will look at how well the school's curriculum, extracurricular activities, and the behaviour of staff and students contribute to the development of students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural understanding. Moreover, Ofsted assesses how well the school helps students to develop a sense of personal responsibility and respect for the rights and values of others. They will pay particular attention to how the school teaches pupils to understand different cultures and faiths, and how it prepares students for life in modern Britain by:

equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society; developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law. (DfE, 2019/5, p. 9)

According to all these documents, the teachers have been expected to contribute the student's moral development by holding or demonstrating the positive values, attitudes, and behaviour they expect from children and young people (TDA, 2008) including dignity, mutual respect, and tolerance (DfE, 2011). The specific details of the requirements outlined in these policies can be found in Table 1 (see Appendix 12 for the extended version of this table). They are not only expected but also evaluated whether they support students' personal development including the development areas of SMSC, PSHE, FBVs, and RHSE, character and citizenship education (DfE, 2022).

TABLE 1: OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS & REQUIREMENTS REGARDING TO MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENTS

			TERMINOLOGY
QUALIFIED TO TEACH (DfES, 2006)	<p>Professional Values and Practice: *They have high expectations of all pupils; respect their social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds; and are committed to raising their educational achievement.</p> <p>*They demonstrate and promote the positive values, attitudes, and behaviour that they expect from their pupils.</p>	<p>(Professional) Knowledge and Understanding: *They know and understand the values, aims and purposes and the general teaching requirements set out in the National curriculum handbook. As relevant to the age range they are trained to teach, they are familiar with the programme of study for citizenship and the national curriculum framework for personal, social and health Education (PSHE)</p>	<p>Professional Skills: <u>Teaching:</u> *They have high expectations of pupils and build successful relationships, centred on teaching and learning. They establish a purposeful learning environment where diversity is value and where pupils feel secure and confident. *They set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to anticipate and manage pupils' behaviour constructively and promote self-control and independence.</p>
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS (TDA, 2007)	<p>Professional Attributes: <u>Relationship with children and young people:</u> *Have high expectations of children and young people including a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full educational potential and to establishing fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with them. *Hold positive values and attitudes and adopt high standards of behaviour in their professional role.</p>	<p>Professional Knowledge and Understanding: <u>Achievement and Diversity:</u> *Understand how children and young people develop and how the progress, rate of development and well-being of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic influences.</p>	<p>Professional Skills: <u>Learning Environment:</u> *Promote learners' self-control, independence, and cooperation through developing their social, emotional, and behavioural skills.</p>
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS (TDA, 2008)	<p>Professional attributes: <u>Relationship with children and young people:</u> *Have high expectations of children and young people including a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full educational potential and to establishing fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with them. *Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes, and behaviour they expect from children and young people.</p>	<p>Professional Knowledge and Understanding: <u>Achievement and Diversity:</u> *Understand how children and young people develop and that the progress and well-being of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic influences.</p>	<p>Professional Skills: <u>Learning Environment:</u> *Establish a purposeful and safe learning environment conducive to learning and identify opportunities for learners to learn in out-of-school contexts. *Establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to manage learners' behaviour constructively and promote their self-control and independence.</p>
TEACHERS' STANDARDS (DfE, 2011, 2021) <small>(Starts from September 2012) (INTRO UPDATED 2013) (TERMINOLOGY UPDATED 2021)</small>	<p>Personal and Professional Conduct: <u>Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:</u> *Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position *Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions *Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others *Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.</p>	<p>Teaching: <u>Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:</u> *Establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect *Set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities, and dispositions *Demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils. <u>Plan and teach well-structured lessons.</u> <u>Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils:</u> *Demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social, and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development <u>Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment.</u> <u>Fulfil wider professional responsibilities:</u> *Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school.</p>	<p>TERMS: Fundamental British Values Parents Pupils School Special educational needs Statutory frameworks</p> <p>'Fundamental British values' is taken from the definition of extremism as articulated in the new Prevent Strategy, which was launched in June 2011. It includes 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'.</p>

<p>ITT CORE CONTENT FRAMEWORK (DfE, 2019/6)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>EARLY CAREER FRAMEWORK (DfE, 2019/4)</p> <p>(ITTCCF requirements are listed here because these two documents are almost identical except for word changes)</p>	<p>Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:</p> <p><u>Learn that:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Teachers have the ability to affect and improve the wellbeing, motivation, and behaviour of their pupils. *Teachers are key role models, who can influence the <u>attitudes, values, and behaviours</u> of their pupils. *Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes; setting goals that challenge and stretch pupils is essential. *Setting clear expectations can help communicate shared values that improve classroom and school culture. *A culture of <u>mutual trust and respect</u> supports effective relationships. *High-quality teaching has a long-term positive effect on pupils' life chances, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. <p>Plan and teach well-structured lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Enabling critical thinking and problem solving by first teaching the necessary foundational content knowledge. <p>Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Seeking to understand pupils' differences, including their different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning, is an essential part of teaching. <p>Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Teachers can influence pupils' resilience and beliefs about their ability to succeed, by ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to experience meaningful success. *Building effective relationships is easier when pupils believe that their feelings will be considered and understood. *Pupils are motivated by intrinsic factors (related to their identity and values) and extrinsic factors (related to reward). <p>Fulfil wider professional responsibilities:</p> <p><u>Learn that:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Effective professional development is likely to be sustained over time, involve expert support or coaching and opportunities for collaboration. *Reflective practice, supported by feedback from and observation of experienced colleagues, professional debate, and learning from educational research, is also likely to support improvement. *Teachers can make valuable contributions to the wider life of the school in a broad range of ways, including by supporting and developing effective professional relationships with colleagues. *Engaging in high-quality professional development can help teachers improve.
<p>OFSTED EDUCATION INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (DfE, 2019/5)</p> <p>(Last Updated 2022)</p>	<p>3. Personal development: EIF grade criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The curriculum extends beyond the academic, technical, or vocational and provides for learners' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents. * The curriculum and the provider's wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy. * At each stage of education, the provider prepares learners for future success in their next steps. * The provider prepares learners for life in modern Britain by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society; - developing their understanding of fundamental British values; - developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; - celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law. <p>Character, resilience and British values such as tolerance are important characteristics, which we want to develop in children and young people. Education should help prepare learners to lead ethical, productive, and fulfilling lives and to contribute positively to society.</p> <p>NOTE: there is no direct mention of SMSC, PSHE, RSHE within this framework</p>
<p>OFSTED GUIDANCE SCHOOL INSPECTION HANDBOOK (DfE, 2022)</p>	<p>Evaluating Personal development: 293. These include how the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * ensures that curriculum subjects such as <u>citizenship, RE</u> and other areas such as <u>personal, social, health and economic education, and relationships and sex education</u>, contribute to pupils' personal development – including by considering the provision, quality and take-up of extra-curricular activities offered by the school *develops pupils to become responsible, respectful and active citizens who are able to play their part and become actively involved in public life as adults *through the curriculum, assemblies, wider opportunities, visits, discussions and literature, <u>develops and deepens pupils' understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law, and mutual respect and tolerance</u> *<u>develops pupils' characters, which we define as a set of positive personal traits, dispositions and virtues that informs pupils' motivation and guides their conduct so that they reflect wisely, learn eagerly, behave with integrity and cooperate consistently well with others. This gives pupils the qualities they need to flourish in our society</u> *<u>develops pupils' confidence, resilience and knowledge so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy</u> *develops pupils' understanding of how to keep physically healthy, eat healthily and maintain an active lifestyle, including giving ample opportunities for pupils to be active during the school day and through extra-curricular activities *develops pupils' age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships through appropriate <u>relationships and sex education</u> <p>304. On graded inspections, inspectors will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Whether the school has had due regard to the statutory guidance on RHSE (Relationships, sex, and health education) *pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, citizenship education, modern British values, the development of character and wider development <p><i>NOTE: Details of evaluation criteria for Relationships and Sex education can be found at points 296. – 298.; for Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education at points 299. – 303.</i></p>

However, there are several concerns that need to be addressed. Firstly, the official documents regarding the pre-service and in-service education of the teachers lack specificity in terms of the requirements of moral education beyond serving as good role models for the students. Secondly, although some of the aims of personal and professional conduct and teaching aspects have been listed with 'learn that' and 'learn how to' statements; the pedagogies and teaching strategies for achieving these aims are absent. Thirdly, there is a dearth of evidence indicating that teacher education programmes offer adequate engagement with the theories and research on moral education, which is crucial for the development of teachers' moral and ethical reasoning skills to navigate ethical decision-making challenges in the classroom, as pointed out by Orchard and Winch (2015). It is important to note that being a good role model is not sufficient enough for teachers to effectively teach moral education or cultivate the ability to make moral judgements. Teachers need knowledge of theories, research, methods, and materials on moral education just as they need to have their subject knowledge.

In conclusion, it is evident that the moral education is a missing component of the teacher training policies regarding to the Teachers' Standards, ITCCF, ECF, and EIF, despite the policies of SMSC, PSHE, FBVs, citizenship, RSHE, and character education emphasizing the importance of students' moral development. Moreover, the mere emphasis and availability of these requirements does not guarantee that teachers are cognizant of them or utilizing them in practice. Therefore, it is a crucial consideration to examine whether teachers receive any training or courses within their Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs or during their teaching career. Previous research on this issue has indicated a shortage of available training for teachers to meet the requirements regarding moral education.

For example, Nick Mead focuses on values education in B.Ed. and PGCE programmes, PSHE and citizenship education, and the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) (2003, 2004, and 2007). His principal area of research is beginning teacher training, and his overarching conclusion is that teacher candidates must build their own values prior to offering values education, and that ITT programmes pay insufficient attention to this topic (Mead, 2004). Furthermore, Mead (2007) examines the GTP programmes and their opportunities for the development of professional values in education. He suggests paying more attention to the process of trainees' values education in terms of the development of their professional values, as well as their reflective and dialogical skills and those of their mentors (Mead, 2007). In his following study, Mead (2010) concludes that the introduction of teaching standards in professional values and practice may offer the chance to put human development back into the centre of teacher education. The study found that personal and professional development is crucial for teachers to gain an understanding of their role in values

education. B.Ed. elective students who participated in such development gained confidence in their role, while PGCE students felt they did not have enough opportunities for such development and wanted more specific guidance on the relationship between personal and professional values (Mead, 2010).

Similarly, Revell and Arthur (2007) focus on the teacher training programmes, but with a different focus: their attitudes towards and experiences with character education in their courses and their teaching placements in schools. They conclude that character and values education is seen as part of RE, SMSC, citizenship, and PSHE, but there is a lack of training in these areas, which "reduces teachers to mere technicians." (Revell and Arthur, 2007). Furthermore, a research report published by the Jubilee Centre also shows that among 255 teachers from the UK and Ireland only 33% of them mentioned having specific or additional training in moral or character education although majority of them taught a subject relating the whole development of the students such as citizenship or PSHE (Arthur et al, 2015).

Another research conducted by Wolstenholme and Wills (2016) with the explicit objective of determining how the status and provision of PSHE in schools have changed during the coalition administration from 2010 to 2015. They conclude that PSHE is expected to be taught in schools, but there are barriers to provide it effectively including lack of available training for teachers in national level, teaching materials for the subject, and the time constrains and pressure of achieving academic outcomes (Wolstenholme and Wills, 2016).

Most recently, in their research about becoming a moral teacher and the ITE programmes, Sanderse and Cooke (2021) state that the ITE programs in the UK focus on mastering subject-specific content rather than reflecting the aims of education. The study found that there is a lack of research on how student teachers are prepared to address moral issues, and how experienced teachers recall this aspect of their initial professional education (Sanderse and Cooke, 2021).

It is important to note that, most of these studies are with candidate teachers, and there is a lack of research on service teachers' personal and professional development in relation to the requirements of the moral education policies. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap in the literature by asking the service teachers about their pre- and in-service teacher education programmes as well as their understanding and experiences of the moral education policies.

In addition, all these studies show that the ITE programmes are not sufficient enough to help teachers meeting the requirements in the moral education policies, including policies of SMSC, citizenship, PSHE and character education. Moreover, the ITE programmes are lacking to support teachers

personal and professional development regarding to moral education, and so the role of teachers are reduced to “mere technicians”, as argued by Revell and Arthur (2007). Orchard and Winch (2015) argue that the ITE programmes should aim to equip candidate teachers for the professional conception of teaching which they called as professional development theory. In accordance with this theory, teachers must possess more than just technical and subject knowledge; they must also possess a profound comprehension of educational concepts and the debates surrounding aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced educational practices, engage with educational research, and exhibit strong ethical reasoning skills to successfully navigate ethical decision-making challenges within the classroom (Orchard and Winch, 2015). The subsequent section will elaborate further on this theory.

Professional development theory

In the education system, teachers are often classified as technicians, craft workers, or professionals (Orchard and Winch, 2015). As the education system faces major changes in teacher training, it is important to consider the best ways to prepare teachers for their demanding yet rewarding work (Orchard and Winch, 2015). According to Oancea and Orchard (2012), established methods of preparing teachers have been called into question, and new kinds of training are needed to improve the quality of schooling. Orchard and Winch (2015) argue that current teacher training in England places too little emphasis on the theoretical and research background necessary for high-quality teaching and that the best teachers need a conceptual framework to think about education, practical professional knowledge and skills, and an understanding of the ethical dimensions of their work. Ultimately, teachers need to be seen as professionals who require ongoing training and development to fulfil their critical role in society (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

According to Winch (2013), teachers are often viewed as "executive technicians" who are told what to do without understanding why. This view assumes that standard classroom practices work effectively regardless of context. In England, the National Strategies provided teachers with "off the peg" instructions to support the implementation of the National Curriculum and RE (DfE, 2011). While technical knowledge is necessary for planning lessons and differentiating for pupils' needs, good teachers use their professional judgement and adapt lessons to suit their specific context (Orchard and Winch, 2015).

This aligns with the argument put forward by Biesta (2010) and Ball (2013) that teaching cannot be reduced to a mere technical task, as it involves moral, political, and cultural dimensions. Darling-Hammond (2006) highlights the importance of adaptive expertise, which involves the ability to

respond to unexpected situations and challenges in creative and flexible ways. Therefore, teachers need technical knowledge but must also be more than just technicians, using their professional judgement and techniques to make sound judgments in complex and ambiguous situations (Orchard and Winch, 2015). In conclusion, while technical knowledge is necessary for effective teaching, teachers cannot be reduced to mere "executive technicians" who follow prescribed instructions without understanding their rationale and must use their professional judgement and adaptive expertise to make sound judgments in complex and ambiguous situations.

The notion of teachers as craft workers has been introduced by Michael Gove, former Secretary of State for Education, who described teaching as a craft that can be best learned through apprenticeship (Gove, 2010). Several studies have explored the concept of teaching as a craft, with scholars highlighting the importance of subject knowledge, personal authority, and situational judgment. For example, Coldron and Smith (1999) identified craft skills fundamental to teaching, including the ability to "control the pace, style and content of classroom discourse" (p. 723) and to "design and orchestrate classroom activities" (p. 724). Similarly, Hoyle (1974) described teaching as a "restricted profession" in which practitioners relied on intuition and experience rather than theory.

However, some scholars argue that relying solely on intuition and experience may not be sufficient for effective teaching (Orchard and Winch, 2015; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999; Shulman, 1987). Orchard and Winch (2015), for example, advocate for the integration of theory and technical know-how in the classroom for an effective teaching experience. Moreover, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) argue that teaching is both an art and a science and that effective teaching requires a deep understanding of the subject matter, pedagogy, and learners. Similarly, Shulman (1987) proposed the concept of pedagogical content knowledge, which refers to the intersection of subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and the knowledge of learners. In conclusion, while the concept of teaching as a craft has its merits, it is important to recognize the value of integrating theory and technical know-how in the classroom, as well as engaging critically with research findings. By doing so, teachers can make informed decisions and improve their practice, ultimately leading to better learning outcomes for their students.

The teacher who is well-versed in educational theory and research shares with the skilled craft teacher the ability to direct themselves, but the professional teacher makes sound judgments in the classroom based on a reliable basis of knowledge and principles, rather than intuition or hearsay (Orchard and Winch, 2015).

According to Orchard and Winch (2015) teachers require more than just technical and subject knowledge; they also need to have a deep understanding of educational concepts and debates surrounding aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced educational practices, engage with educational research, and possess strong ethical reasoning skills to navigate ethical decision-making challenges in the classroom (Orchard and Winch, 2015). The teacher who engages with educational research and has a coherent conceptual framework is better equipped to make reliable judgments in various school and classroom contexts, that is called as *practical wisdom* by Orchard and Winch (2015). Practical wisdom involves not only making practical and effective judgments in complex settings but also placing emphasis on ethical considerations and striving for the best outcomes for all students, which should be the overriding ethical principle that guides all aspects of a teacher's professional work (Orchard and Winch, 2015). Given that the objective of this study is to investigate the perceptions and encounters of teachers regarding moral education, the primary emphasis will be on ethical deliberation, along with other elements of professional development theory.

Ethical Deliberation

Teacher professional development theory emphasizes the importance of ethical deliberation and moral education in teacher training programs, as educators play a critical role in shaping students' moral development and character (Lapsley, 2011; Orchard and Winch, 2015). Numerous academic sources have acknowledged the value of ethical reflection and decision-making within the domain of teacher education (e.g., Lapsley, 2011; Bergem, 1993; Carr, 2000, 2006; Noddings, 1984, 1992, 2017; Strike and Soltis, 1992).

According to Lapsley (2011), teachers must possess the knowledge and skills to guide students through moral and ethical dilemmas, foster ethical reasoning and decision-making, and promote a sense of moral responsibility and social justice. Therefore, teacher education programs should aim to develop teachers' ethical awareness, sensitivity, and competence, to promote teachers' moral reasoning skills, and to provide opportunities for them to reflect on their values, beliefs, and ethical practices (Lapsley, 2011).

Bergem (1993) argues that teaching is inherently moral and that teachers must navigate complex moral dilemmas in their daily practice. He contends that teachers need to possess ethical awareness and sensitivity, engage in reflective practice, and participate in ongoing moral dialogue to develop their ethical competence as professionals.

Similarly, Carr (2005) suggests that ethical issues arise in every aspect of teaching, from classroom management to curriculum development, and that teachers need to develop their ethical reasoning

skills to address these issues effectively. He emphasizes the importance of moral education in teacher training programs and suggests that teachers should be encouraged to reflect on their own moral beliefs and practices.

Noddings (1984) argues that ethical caring should be at the centre of teaching and that teachers should endeavour to cultivate caring relationships with their students, which he calls as a moral responsibility in a more recent work (Noddings, 2017). Noddings (2017) further suggests that moral education should be integrated into all aspects of teacher education, from coursework to field experiences.

Similarly, Carr and Kemmis (2003) emphasize that reflective practice is a crucial component of teacher education, which involves examining one's beliefs, values, and assumptions and considering the ethical implications of one's actions in the classroom. In line with this, Strike and Soltis (1992) advocate for the integration of ethical reflection and moral education into all teacher training programs, suggesting that teachers must be reflective practitioners capable of critically examining their values and beliefs, making decisions based on what they believe is right, and possessing the knowledge and skills to address ethical issues in a thoughtful and principled manner as they engage in ongoing ethical reflection and decision-making.

In summary, teachers must possess ethical awareness and sensitivity, engage in reflective practice and moral dialogue, and develop their ethical reasoning skills to navigate the complex moral dilemmas of teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to provide teachers with education on ethical theories and principles, as well as a platform to discuss and deliberate their implications within the classroom setting (Orchard and Winch, 2015). In addition, Darling-Hammond (2017) argue that becoming an effective teacher is an ongoing process that requires continuous professional development. Hence, it needs to be part of the teacher education programmes during pre-service and in-service periods of the teachers. However, Orchard and Winch (2015) point out that despite the importance of ethical reflection, current teacher education programs do not prioritize it enough due to time constraints and competing priorities.

Besides investigating teachers' perceptions and experiences of teaching moral education, this research also aims to examine the secondary school teachers' experiences of the pre-service and in-service education to determine if moral education and ethical reflection were integrated into their programmes. The professional development theory shall be employed during the analysis and discussion of the outcomes pertaining to the teachers' comprehension of their responsibilities and encounters with both initial and ongoing education programs.

Furthermore, this study has a specific focus on the subject areas and aims to consider the roles and responsibilities of different subjects in contributing moral development of the students and meeting the requirements in the education agenda. In the next section, selected subject areas will be presented as examples of their role and contribution to the moral education.

The role of Subject areas

As seen from the historical process, the requirements regarding the moral development of the students are for the schools in general and not specific to the subject areas. Religious education and citizenship are the only subject areas whose contribution to moral education is articulated clearly in the literature. However, as suggested by the policies, the moral development of the students is not just their duty but also needs to be part of the whole school program, including activities, discussions, and events within the school's ethos and within other subject areas. Given the historical association of moral education with Religious Education in English education system, it is important to explore the role of RE in students' moral development. In this section, I will examine how religious education serves as an example of subject areas that contribute to moral education. Following this, some of the arguments about moral education as a discrete subject area will be considered, and the potential of this will be argued.

Religious Education (RE)

It has long been debated whether moral education should be included in religious education (RE) or whether a more secular moral education separate from religions is required (see, for example, Bull, 1969; Barnes, 2012; Hand, 2003; and White, 2003). There have been debates about the traditional relationship between RE and morality— “unshakeable moral authority” (Bull, 1969); around religious morality and indoctrination (Hand, 2003; Bull, 1969); and about secular moral beliefs or values in a modern and secular society (Barnes, 2014). However, RE has kept its place as a compulsory subject since the 1944 Education Act, despite the developments and changes in its aims and purposes over time.

RE in Education Agenda

In the 1940s, Britain was predominantly Christian, and the primary objective of religious instruction in schools was to instil Christian faith and moral principles in students (Hand in White, 2004, p. 153-154). In 1943, the Educational Reconstruction White Paper stated that everyone, including those in churches, desired religious instruction to play a far larger role in schools in order to examine the spiritual and personal values of British society and the national culture. Additionally, the document

proposed that collective worship, which was already a part of the majority of schools at the time, be mandated in schools (Louden, 2004, p. 276). Consequently, with the 1944 Education Act, group worship (school "assemblies") and religious education became mandatory, with parental rights to "withdraw their children from religious worship or teaching" (Education Act 1944, section 25 (1), (2), and (4)). Followingly, in 1967, the Plowden report, published by the Central Advisory Council for Education, confirmed that the purpose of RE is to introduce students to religion in a simple and positive manner, with the proclamation of Christianity and its moral values being the primary objective of this *introduction* (DES, 1967, para. 572).

Early in the 1970s, the Christian nature of RE was completely remodelled to include the systematic introduction of other faiths, as Britain began to become a multicultural nation in which Christianity was no longer the only religion (Hand in White, 2004, p. 155). However, RE's function in fostering moral development remained unchanged until the end of the 1980s, despite attempts to separate morality and religion (Hand in White, 2004, p. 155).

In 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), a centrally defined National Curriculum was introduced for all maintained schools, and the provision of the following statements was expressed as a 'duty' of all maintained schools and local authorities; promotion of 'the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and preparing such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life' (Education Act 1988, (1)). On the other side, the emphasis on RE and Christian collective worship was renewed, and RE retained its position as the centre of moral teaching (Hand in White, 2004, p. 156). Previously, the role consisted of inculcating the "moral virtues of Christian upbringing," but it has evolved into an invitation to the "ancient moral wisdom stored up in the religions of the world" or Christian national culture (Hand in White, 2004, p. 157).

In 1999, the National Curriculum handbook for teachers was published with the statement of:

"Religious education makes a distinctive contribution to the school curriculum by developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion, religious beliefs, practices, language and traditions and their influence on individuals, communities, societies, and cultures. It enables pupils to consider and respond to a range of important questions related to their own spiritual development, the development of values and attitudes and fundamental questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life." (DfEE and QCA, 1999).

However, it's important to note that schools were not provided with a specific RE curriculum within the handbook. Instead, they were afforded greater flexibility in determining the content of their RE

curriculum, in line with the distinctive English and Welsh provision of Agreed Syllabus handbooks for RE in every Local Education Authority (LEA).

Each LEA is required to have its own Agreed Syllabus for RE, tailored to the needs and context of the local area (Kay, 2012). Schools within an LEA are expected to follow the Agreed Syllabus provided by their local authority when teaching RE (Kay, 2012). However, the syllabuses typically allow for flexibility in how schools interpret and deliver the content, taking into account their own ethos, resources, and the needs of their students (Kay, 2012).

In 2004, the National Framework for Religious Education (NFRE) (QCA, 2004) was published as the inaugural non-statutory national framework for religious education in England, signed up by the churches, other faith communities, and the then British Humanist Association, emphasising the importance of fostering a comprehensive understanding of citizenship in a modern democracy. The aim of this framework was to play a crucial role in guiding students through spiritual, moral, and social questions, aiming to transform their self-assessment and global awareness (QCA, 2004). It recommended the study of Christianity throughout each key stage and the inclusion of other major religions like Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. Additionally, it advocated for the study of other religious traditions and secular philosophies to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum (QCA, 2004). Furthermore, the framework (QCA, 2004) underscores the significance of exploring interfaith dialogue and the role of religion in promoting community cohesion and combating religious prejudice and discrimination.

Since the release of the National Framework for Religious Education (NFRE) in 2004 by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), there has been a continuous suggestion to incorporate non-religious belief systems into the mandatory Religious Education (RE) curriculum in English schools (Tillson, 2012). In 2013, *A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England* was published by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, which is pronounced as a *national benchmark document* for RE by Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education (The Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013). The purpose of the RE was stated as “*learning about and from religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts*”, and exploring and considering the questions about “*about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.*” (The Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013). According to the document In RE, students learn to evaluate the worth of wisdom from various sources, develop and articulate their responses, and respectfully agree or disagree, and education should equip them with a thorough understanding of different religions and worldviews, allowing them to establish their own concepts, values, and identities, cultivate a capacity for conversation and

positive contribution to a diverse society, acquire and utilize the abilities to comprehend, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of knowledge and authority, explain their personal beliefs, thoughts, values, and experiences clearly and eloquently, while respecting the right of others to hold divergent views (The Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013).

In essence, despite the change from teaching Christianity and its values to teaching values and beliefs of world religions, including non-religious ones, the significance of RE in promoting moral development among students has remained unchanged. Although subjects such as SMSC, PSHE, Citizenship, and RSE are designated for providing moral education, they do not have a dedicated time slot in the school curriculum, making RE one of the key subjects for moral education in many schools. Hence, RE can play a crucial role in the moral development of students by providing a framework for understanding moral values, promoting critical thinking about moral issues, fostering moral reasoning, and promoting a sense of community and shared values, thereby promoting social cohesion and mutual respect.

Moral Education as A Discrete Subject

As seen from the literature and English education history, religious education has been one of the main places for moral education of the students. As stated initially, one of the main points of this study is to explore the roles of subject areas, alongside from RE, as there is lack of research exploring this field. Additionally, another debated issue in the literature concerns whether moral education could feasibly be taught as a separate domain within schools. This section will examine the arguments presented by John Wilson, Peter McPhail, John Tillson, and Michael Hand regarding moral education as an independent subject area and assess its possibility in schools.

JOHN WILSON

John Wilson has made significant, unique, and substantial contributions to moral education, focusing on addressing fundamental questions to enhance clarity in the field, as well as presenting a comprehensive theoretical framework (McLaughlin and Halstead, 2000). A pivotal aspect of his theoretical framework revolves around the delineation of moral thinking as a distinct domain, separate from the pedagogical approaches of teaching virtues or values within subject areas such as religious education or literature. This aspect renders his work particularly significant within the context of this study.

According to John Wilson (1972, 1973, 1990, 2000), morality primarily concerns the inclinations underlying human desires, emotions, and behaviours. He contends that moral conduct should not

solely derive from specific rationales but also align with individuals' attitudes and emotions (Wilson, 1990). In Wilson's perspective, the aim of moral education extends beyond the transmission of particular moral principles to equip students with the capacity to make moral judgements and act upon them. This entails fostering rational and well-informed moral deliberation among students to effectively navigate ethical dilemmas (Wilson, 1990).

Wilson (1972, p. 5) emphasizes that the principal objective of moral education is to facilitate individuals in independently and rationally formulating their moral values and making appropriate decisions. His model of moral education underscores the autonomy of individuals, the cultivation of their own cognitive frameworks, and creativity in moral discernment. The individual's actions should align completely with their sentiments, intentions, and rationales, with a clear understanding of their decisions and motivations (Wilson, 1972).

Wilson (1973) regards teachers in moral education as pivotal figures shaping future generations and advocates for enhancing their status accordingly. Thus, while the content and methodologies employed in moral education are crucial, the role modelling by teachers elevates their significance further. The practical aspect of moral education holds equal importance alongside its philosophical dimension (Wilson, 1972). Therefore, teachers must grasp and endorse the overarching aims and concepts of moral education while effectively communicating these objectives to students. However, similar to religious education, indoctrination should be avoided in moral education, focusing instead on cultivating students' ability to articulate their viewpoints coherently and approach moral issues with clarity and rationality (Wilson, 1972, 1973).

In moral education, methodology is as crucial as content (Wilson, 1972, 1973, 2000). Wilson (1972, 1973) suggests that teachers should comprehend the general objectives and concepts of moral education and delineate the learning objectives for their students. However, employing diverse instructional methods is essential, as it expedites the attainment of target behaviours. Storytelling, role-playing, drama, and simulation exercises are deemed suitable by Wilson for fostering students' creativity and collaborative problem-solving skills, which are indispensable for grappling with moral quandaries (Wilson, 1973).

In his books, *Practical Methods of Moral Education* and *A Teacher's Guide to Moral Education*, Wilson draws attention that morality and its education, as any other subject, requires 'direct teaching' (1972, p.11) of how students should think in moral area with its own methodology and procedure. Through this moral methodology, students are required to comprehend, articulate, and employ right reasons to relevant scenarios by the conclusion of the moral thinking process (Wilson, 1972, p. 18).

Wilson's moral thinking methodology comprises several qualities of requirements to think and act morally -and correctly- that teachers must first familiarize themselves with before instructing students (Wilson, 1973). He states that although there are other qualities, four qualities are of importance for correct thinking and acting, which are concern for other people, awareness of emotions, knowledge, and alertness and control (Wilson. 1973, p. 93). He uses abbreviations for each quality for the formulation of moral thinking process.

“We saw that it was a matter of having concern for others (PHIL): being able to notice situations and decide about them in the right way (KRAT): being aware of one's own and other people's feelings (EMP): and of the relevant 'hard' facts (GIG). We know, then, how we ought to go about deciding what we should do and doing it.” (Wilson, 1973, p. 98)

By integrating these pillars of moral education, individuals could be equipped with the necessary tools and insights to navigate the complexities of moral decision-making with integrity and efficacy. Wilson further argues that being good at moral thinking is not about being intelligent, it is about learning the steps of reasoning and being sensible (1973). The teachers role is helping students to find their own answers to moral questions by teaching them the methods of moral reasoning (Wilson, 1972, p. 99). However, he emphasizes the necessity for teachers to explicitly signal to students when engaging in moral deliberation as attempting to deliver moral education across various subjects and units within schools could lead to confusion (Wilson 1972, 1973, 1990). He posits that the cognitive processes involved in scientific inquiry- or in any other subject- differ from those in moral reasoning. While incorporating moral values across different subjects can aid moral education, it risks muddling students' comprehension of both the subject matter and ethical deliberation. Thus, Wilson (1972, 1973) suggests exploring "moral thought" as an alternative framework for imparting moral education, either integrated across various subjects or as a distinct domain with direct signalling to moral thinking. Moreover, he meticulously elucidates the necessity of social arrangements as a prerequisite for the moral education process, particularly emphasizing the significance of the 'family model' social framework, wherein interpersonal relationships between adults and students are central to the process (Wilson, 1972, p. 104).

In conclusion, through his meticulous exploration of fundamental questions, Wilson has shed light on the essence of moral thinking and the importance of moral education in shaping individuals' ethical decision-making processes. He advocates for a structured approach to moral education, emphasizing the autonomy of individuals in formulating their moral values and making informed decisions. Wilson underscores the crucial role of teachers as role models and facilitators in moral education, highlighting the need for clear communication and direct teaching of moral reasoning methodologies. Additionally,

Wilson stresses the necessity of integrating moral education across various subjects while maintaining clarity and coherence in the teaching process. By incorporating these principles, Wilson's framework provides a comprehensive guide for fostering moral development and ethical reasoning in individuals.

However, as presented in previous sections, although there are policies aiming to develop students' autonomy and character in line with the aims of moral education Wilson argues, the ways to do morality seem missing in the education agenda. Furthermore, the main actors in the moral reasoning process are the teachers, regardless of their expertise; however, as seen in the previous section, in the literature teachers' professional education—regarding the policy and practice—seems to be a missing part of the process.

PETER McPHAIL

Peter McPhail is a prominent figure in moral education in the UK, particularly with his pivotal involvement in the Schools Council Lifeline Project Moral Education in the Secondary School. His work has focused on various aspects of moral development and education in secondary schools, aiming to enhance ethical understanding and behaviour among students.

One of McPhail's significant contributions is his emphasis on the importance of integrating moral education into the curriculum and the social arrangements with the Lifeline project (McPhail, 1972). He (1972, p.3) advocates for creating structured programs and opportunities within schools with the aim of teaching students the ways of 'learning to care' for a better life and society with the cultivation of moral reasoning, empathy, and ethical decision-making skills among students.

McPhail (1972, p.5) explains that the Lifeline project, with its focus on fostering learning to care, emerged following the findings of the School Council Report on Young School Leavers, which revealed that 70 percent of secondary school students were leaving school due to unmet expectations from educational institutions. These expectations included enhancing their comprehension of moral conduct (good and bad behaviours) and aiding them in addressing interpersonal challenges.

McPhail (1972) asserts that education should not only acknowledge but also propose solutions to the negative and destructive aspects of society. Rather than focusing solely on constraining individuals and conforming them to societal norms, education should empower people to address behavioural issues effectively. He underscores that the phenomenon of school leavers serves as a reminder that education encompasses caring for others, facilitating decision-making for positive change, fostering adaptability and enthusiasm for life, nurturing autonomy, and providing enriching experiences (McPhail, 1972).

The Lifeline school program aims to prioritize individuals' needs and feelings, guiding them to identify and resolve their own issues, which subsequently fosters empathy towards others' challenges and facilitates collective problem-solving (McPhail, 1972). It involves identifying current human needs, setting priorities, developing policies to address these needs, establishing organizations for internal education and change, and motivating participants to actively engage in the process. Academically, the program aims to promote observational skills, understanding verbal and non-verbal cues, assessing the consequences of actions, scientific knowledge acquisition, and creative expression, including writing. It emphasizes interdisciplinary learning, acknowledging the importance of science alongside other subjects like religion, philosophy, politics, and economics in decision-making (McPhail, 1972). The program accommodates students at all levels of academic ability and contributes to academic success by addressing personal challenges, thereby reducing distractions from schoolwork (McPhail, 1972).

As McPhail (1972, p.10) states, there are concerns regarding the development of moral education, with some fearing it may undermine religious education. However, according to McPhail, the Lifeline project is open to collaboration with those interested in children's welfare, regardless of religious or political affiliations. McPhail (1972) emphasizes that while religious education can contribute to moral development, moral education stands as a distinct field aimed at cultivating empathy and considerate behaviour in all students. McPhail notes that the materials have been utilized within and outside of dedicated religious education time. He asserts that this approach is intended to complement, not replace, religious education; rejects accusations of attempting to revive religious education under a different guise and welcomes any improvement in RE resulting from our techniques. He highlights the aim of providing diverse opportunities for fostering empathy, extending beyond scheduled moral education sessions (McPhail, 1972).

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aim of providing diverse opportunities for fostering empathy, extending beyond scheduled moral education sessions (McPhail, 1972).

Peter McPhail (1972) articulates that the Lifeline program has been rigorously tested and refined, demonstrating its effectiveness in various school settings and engaging over 20,000 students prior to publication. It represents a systematic and professionally developed effort to foster a lifestyle that is both personally fulfilling and considerate of others within the modern curriculum framework (McPhail, 1972). Lifeline programme encompasses a range of materials and methods aimed at promoting moral education including a textbook for curriculum development, and a handbook that addresses the importance of institutional support in fostering moral behaviour throughout the school community.

The Lifeline project suggests that effective moral education should:

1. Clearly define the concept of "moral."
2. Equip individuals with the tools to navigate complex interpersonal situations ethically.
3. Be logically sound and justifiable.
4. Inspire individuals to act morally.
5. Emphasize that morality extends beyond reciprocating kindness.
6. Acknowledge that moral behaviour often involves personal decisions that may conflict with societal norms.
7. Be engaging and enjoyable. (McPhail, 1972, p. 77)

It asserts that moral education can meet these criteria successfully. Young people are naturally interested in interpersonal relationships and their associated challenges, provided they feel safe expressing themselves. However, investigations into the motivations behind the mistreatment of others should not be used to suppress or hide hostile feelings but instead should encourage honesty and provide constructive opportunities for expression within group settings (McPhail, 1972).

Moreover, McPhail (1972, p.88) highlights the role of teachers in fostering moral development. He emphasizes the need for teachers to serve as moral role models and facilitators, guiding students through discussions and activities that promote moral reflection and growth. Since, moral education benefits from diverse approaches tailored to the specific needs of students, the Lifeline program emphasizes practicality and flexibility. They encourage teachers to adapt the methods to suit their students' requirements. McPhail (1972) emphasised that despite the wide array of materials available, the Lifeline program maintains coherence and consistency throughout its components.

In essence, Peter McPhail's (1972) comprehension of moral education, particularly exemplified through the Lifeline project, serves as a significant model for the implementation of moral education within school systems. Similar to John Wilson, McPhail (1972) advocates for the recognition of moral education as a distinct discipline, requiring dedicated time and a unique pedagogical approach. He stresses the necessity for moral education to be integrated into school curricula as a standalone subject. However, McPhail also acknowledges the importance of incorporating insights from other academic domains and emphasizes the need for teacher training in this regard. Notably, the Lifeline project aims to tailor the curriculum to meet the specific needs of students, thereby highlighting the importance of both initial teacher education and ongoing in-service training, a sentiment echoed by Lord Belstead during the Hansard discussions (UK Parliament, 1974).

JOHN TILLSON

From a different perspective than Wilson and McPhail, John Tillson (2011) suggests that a separate ethics education should be provided in schools for the moral and ethical development of students.

John Tillson (2011) advocates for the importance of separate ethics education as it provides a focused platform for exploring questions of how one ought to live. Tillson (2011) argues that ethics education, as a standalone subject, allows for the inclusion of both religious and non-religious perspectives on ethical questions, thereby providing students with a comprehensive understanding of different belief systems and their practical implications. He (2011) contends that extracting ethics from RE would address the identity crisis faced by the subject, ensuring clarity about its core purpose and objectives. By creating a dedicated space for the systematic study of ethical questions, separate ethics education enables students to develop critical thinking skills and engage in meaningful dialogue about moral issues, independent of religious affiliations (Tillson, 2011). Moreover, Tillson (2011) suggests that the ethics curriculum can encompass diverse philosophical perspectives, allowing students to explore a wide range of ethical theories and frameworks beyond the confines of religious doctrines. Thus, for Tillson, separate ethics education is crucial for fostering intellectual autonomy, moral reasoning, and a deeper understanding of the complexities of ethical decision-making in contemporary society.

While Tillson's argument primarily focuses on advocating for ethics education over religious education to empower individuals to engage with ethical questions and uphold moral values in a pluralistic society, he does not directly address the moral or character education of pupils. Nonetheless, although Tillson did not offer any practical suggestions, his emphasis on ethics education aligns with the suggestions put forth by Willson and McPhail regarding the establishment of a separate and dedicated space for moral education within schools.

MICHAEL HAND

Michael Hand's *Theory of Moral Education* (2017) addresses the multifaceted challenge of fostering morality in children amidst the backdrop of reasonable disagreement regarding moral standards and their justifications. Hand (2017) confronts this dilemma head-on, asserting that while moral education must navigate the complexities of differing perspectives, it can and should remain firmly grounded in rationality. Recognizing the daunting task educators face in cultivating children's commitment to moral standards without resorting to indoctrination, Hand proposes a nuanced approach (2017). He argues that while many moral standards and justificatory theories are subject to reasonable disagreement, some foundational moral principles possess robust justification. Consequently, Hand (2017) advocates for a balanced educational strategy: teaching controversial moral matters impartially to enable children to develop their own informed opinions, while simultaneously directing instruction towards those basic moral standards that are unequivocally justified.

Moreover, Hand's *Theory of Moral Education* extends beyond mere instruction in moral reasoning, emphasizing the vital roles of moral formation and moral inquiry in the educational process. Moral formation entails the deliberate cultivation of virtues and character traits essential for ethical behaviour and moral decision-making (Hand, 2017). Hand (2017) contends that moral education should not solely focus on cognitive aspects such as moral reasoning but should also address affective and conative dimensions, nurturing virtues like empathy, compassion, integrity, and resilience. Through intentional practices such as role modelling, storytelling, and experiential learning, educators can facilitate the internalization of moral values and virtues, shaping students' moral character and guiding their actions beyond mere rule compliance through their teaching practice.

However, while considering conative and affective aspects of moral education as part of other subject areas, Hand (2017) advocates for the integration of moral inquiry into the educational curriculum as a distinct subject. Moral inquiry involves the exploration of ethical questions and dilemmas, encouraging students to critically examine their own beliefs, values, and assumptions, as well as those of others. By engaging in moral inquiry, students develop skills in ethical reflection, analysis, and dialogue, enabling them to navigate complex moral issues with nuance and sensitivity. This approach fosters intellectual curiosity and moral imagination, empowering students to confront ethical challenges with confidence and integrity (Hand, 2017).

Overall, Hand's *Theory of Moral Education* (2017) underscores the interconnectedness of moral reasoning, moral formation, and moral inquiry in fostering ethical development and responsible citizenship. By providing opportunities for students to engage actively in moral learning and reflection,

educators can empower them to become morally autonomous individuals who contribute positively to society. However, unlike John Wilson or Peter McPhail, Hand does not offer specific practical strategies for educators to facilitate the teaching of moral reasoning skills beyond guiding them in identifying what to teach directly and indirectly.

Summary

The discourse surrounding moral education, as highlighted by the perspectives of John Wilson, Peter McPhail, John Tillson, and Michael Hand, underscores the importance of cultivating ethical understanding and moral reasoning skills among students. While Wilson emphasizes the autonomy of individuals in moral decision-making and stresses the significance of direct moral education, McPhail advocates for the integration of moral education into the curriculum through projects like Lifeline, prioritizing students' needs and experiences. Conversely, Tillson suggests the establishment of a separate ethics education to address the identity crisis within religious education and provide a comprehensive platform for exploring ethical questions. Hand's Theory of Moral Education emphasizes the balance between teaching controversial moral matters and imparting foundational moral principles, alongside the cultivation of virtues and moral inquiry.

However, despite these insights, the current education system lacks a distinct subject area dedicated to moral education, leaving educators to navigate moral education within existing frameworks. Therefore, while the contributions of these scholars provide valuable theoretical foundations for moral education, practical implementation strategies and institutional support are needed to effectively integrate moral education into the school curriculum and foster moral development among students. As seen from the education agenda, the moral education needs to be part of all subject areas as well as the whole school program including activities, discussions, and events regarding the school's ethos.

According to Lickona (1991), character education is the most organized and comprehensive approach to moral education. I concur with this argument and consider character education a practical theoretical framework for my research in analysing teachers' experiences of teaching moral education within their subject areas. This study will utilize the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education as a theoretical framework for analysing the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding the potential contributions of various subject areas to students' moral education. The various taxonomies and approaches to character education will be expounded in the subsequent section.

Taxonomies of Character Education

Character education refers to both explicit and implicit educational activities that aim to develop positive personal strengths known as virtues (Jubilee Centre, 2012). The development of character and virtues involves various elements, including imitation, habituation, training in feeling, attention, and perception, as well as the development of moral insight, sympathy, sensitivity, and sensibility, with appropriate guidance and experience (Halstead & McLaughlin, 1999). Virtues refer to dispositions of a person's character, which can be good or bad, such as generosity, charity, compassion, dishonesty, arrogance, and envy (Baehr, 2017).

Character education seeks to cultivate positive character strengths in pupils to enable them to act for 'right reasons' and make ethical autonomous decisions in complex situations (Jubilee Centre, 2012). It is a deliberate and systematic approach to promoting positive character traits and values that contribute to the development of ethical and responsible individuals (Lickona & Davidson, 2005). The ultimate goal is to cultivate moral and ethical reasoning skills that enable individuals to make responsible decisions and act in ways that promote the common good (Lickona & Davidson, 2005).

Furthermore, character education can enhance individuals' emotional well-being by fostering positive character traits and virtues, such as gratitude, forgiveness, and resilience (Nucci & Narvaez, 2008). By promoting positive character traits and virtues, character education programs can improve individuals' overall sense of well-being and happiness. However, debates about what virtues constitute good character and which should be promoted in schools still exist (Jubilee Centre, 2012). Despite these debates, character education remains a critical aspect of education as it helps individuals develop positive character strengths and virtues that contribute to the flourishing of both individuals and society.

However, there are ongoing debates about character education, including what virtues constitute good character, what it means to live a flourishing life, and which virtues should be promoted in schools (Jubilee Centre, 2012). These debates have resulted in the development of various taxonomies of virtues for character education including expansive and non-expansive character education approaches and four-dimensional taxonomy of character strengths (Kristjansson, 2002).

Expansive Character Education

Expansive character education (ECE) is a well-established framework that emphasizes the development of a broad range of character strengths and virtues with a perspectivist approach

(Kristjansson, 2002). Kristjansson identified three main groups of ECE, namely religious-based character education, civic education, and liberationist pedagogy.

Religious-based character education is an approach that aims to teach religious beliefs and virtues with a judgmental perspective and moral reasoning (Kristjansson, 2002). It has been argued that religious-based character education is necessary for religiously fundamentalist members of the society and can be beneficial in faith schools (Beck, 2015). Religious-based character education has also been found to be effective in promoting positive character traits in students (Al-Momani & Al-Nawaiseh, 2017).

Civic education is a form of character education in which democratic virtues, such as tolerance and respect, are taught (Kristjansson, 2002). Research has shown that civic education programs can have a positive impact on students' civic knowledge and skills, as well as their attitudes toward civic engagement (Milbrandt & Lindberg, 2019). Moreover, civic education has been recognized as an essential component of character education, particularly in developing democratic virtues (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004).

Liberationist pedagogy, also known as critical postmodernism, is another approach to character education that emphasizes teaching the virtues and values of the sub-cultures in their local community for the maintenance of their culture (Kristjansson, 2002). Critical postmodernism can be effective in promoting social justice and empowering marginalized groups in society (Miller & Watt, 2016). Furthermore, critical postmodernists support teaching the virtues and values of different groups and cultures in a plural society (Kristjansson, 2002).

In conclusion, expansive character education is a well-researched framework that has been extensively studied in the field of moral education. Religious-based character education, civic education, and liberationist pedagogy are three important approaches within the framework of expansive character education. Research has shown that each of these approaches can be effective in promoting positive character traits in students and can contribute to the development of a more just and equitable society.

Non-expansive Character Education

Non-expansive character education (NECE) is a form of character education that emphasizes the development of fundamental virtues and values that are universal and transcultural in nature (Kristjansson, 2002). Unlike expansive character education, NECE focuses on secular morality, with a primary emphasis on virtues such as kindness, self-control, teamwork, honesty, compassion, and self-

respect (Halstead and McLaughlin, 1999; Kristjansson, 2002). NECE emphasizes the formation of moral habits, which is important for the development of virtuous behaviours.

Halstead and McLaughlin (1999) argue that NECE is more concerned with habit formation and moral development than with the promotion of specific virtues or values. However, they acknowledge the challenge of identifying shared values for everyone, suggesting that at least some core values are necessary for effective character education.

Numerous studies have explored the effectiveness of NECE in promoting positive character traits in individuals. For example, a study conducted by Park and Peterson (2006) found that self-control, one of the key virtues emphasized in NECE, was positively associated with life satisfaction, achievement, and mental and physical health. Similarly, a study by Eisenberg et al. (2013) found that kindness, another virtue emphasized in NECE, was positively associated with social competence and prosocial behaviour.

Moreover, research has shown that NECE can be effective in promoting positive character traits in students from different cultural and religious backgrounds. For instance, a study by Yeşilyaprak (2014) found that NECE was effective in promoting moral reasoning and ethical behaviour in Turkish university students.

In conclusion, non-expansive character education is a form of character education that emphasizes the development of fundamental and transcultural virtues and values, including kindness, self-control, teamwork, honesty, compassion, and self-respect. NECE focuses on habit formation and moral development, which are critical for promoting virtuous behaviours. Research has shown that NECE can be effective in promoting positive character traits in students from different cultural and religious backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of identifying and promoting shared core values.

Overall, the expansive and non-expansive conceptions of character education and the four-dimensional taxonomies are two different approaches to character education that differ in their scope and focus. While non-expansive character education focuses on personal virtues, expansive character education emphasizes social responsibility and civic virtues. The four-dimensional taxonomy, on the other hand, provides a comprehensive model that encompasses moral, intellectual, civic, and performance virtues (Kristjansson, 2002).

Four-dimensional Taxonomy of Character Strengths

The four-dimensional taxonomy of virtues for character education is a comprehensive model that has been widely used in research and practice (Kristjansson, 2016; Lickona et al., 2017; Narvaez et al., 2008). The taxonomy includes four dimensions: moral, performance, intellectual, and civic, each of which includes specific virtues (Nucci, 2001; Kristjansson, 2006; Narvaez et al., 2008).

The moral dimension includes virtues related to ethical behaviour, such as honesty, fairness, and kindness, which provide a foundation for character education (Kristjansson, 2006; Nucci, 2001). The performance dimension includes virtues related to achievement and success, such as perseverance, resilience, and self-control, which are essential for reaching goals and overcoming obstacles (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005; Narvaez et al., 2008). The intellectual dimension includes virtues related to cognitive abilities, such as curiosity, open-mindedness, and creativity, which are important for learning and personal growth (Sternberg, 1990; Narvaez et al., 2008). Finally, the civic dimension includes virtues related to civic engagement, such as responsibility, citizenship, and social justice, which help individuals become active and engaged members of their communities (Battistoni, 2002; Narvaez et al., 2008).

The four-dimensional taxonomy has been found to be a useful tool for promoting character development in educational settings (Narvaez et al., 2008). By identifying specific virtues within each dimension, educators can create targeted interventions and activities that foster the development of these virtues in students. Additionally, the taxonomy provides a framework for assessing character development by measuring changes in specific virtues within each dimension over time (Nucci, 2001).

Despite its usefulness, the four-dimensional taxonomy has also been criticized for being too broad and not providing clear guidance on how to develop virtues in students (Bebeau et al., 2013). Nonetheless, the taxonomy has been influential in shaping character education programs around the world, such as the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues in the UK (Jubilee Centre, 2016). Overall, the four-dimensional taxonomy provides a comprehensive framework for character education that recognizes the importance of developing a range of virtues that are relevant to different aspects of life.

This study will utilize the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education as a theoretical framework for analysing the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding the potential contributions of various subject areas to students' moral education. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues is a leading research institution in the field of character education in the UK. Given the pioneering role of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues in character education within the United Kingdom, I will utilize their taxonomy as an exemplar while exploring various facets of the four-dimensional taxonomy, which can be found at Appendix 11.

Conclusion

The primary objective of this research is to examine the perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers in England with regard to moral education. To this end, the theories of moral education and the government's expectations of the roles and responsibilities of teachers are deemed of crucial significance. The official expectations from teachers include general educational policies aimed at promoting the moral development of students, the Teachers' Standards, the Early Career and ITT Core content Frameworks, and the objectives of the National Curriculum, both in its general and subject-specific aspects. In light of this focus, the research design is structured into three separate components which will be considered in both the literature review and findings and discussion chapters, in the order outlined.

The first part of this chapter addresses the R.Q.1. and provides an overview of the theories of moral education and the historical progression of policy developments in the English education system with the emphasis placed on the potential impact of these theories on the policies in place. In sum, the significance of fostering moral development among students has been a persistent theme in the English educational system throughout history. The method of imparting moral education has undergone changes, evolving from religious instruction to its integration as a component of various educational programs such as Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural, Mental and Physical Education (SMSC), Personal, Social, Health, and Economics Education (PSHE), Citizenship Education, Fundamental British Values (FBVs), Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSE), and Character Education. Although these programs may not explicitly be referred to as moral education, they are based on similar principles concerning the moral growth of children and the role of education (Revell and Arthur, 2007). Therefore, this research adopts these policies as part of moral education, thereby providing a common basis for discussion among teachers. Therefore, Ball's policy enactment theory will be employed as the theoretical framework to analyse the data regarding teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education policies.

Since it is reasonable to presume that teachers are informed of the educational policies and societal changes that impact their work, given that they operate within the same societal context. In addition to the previously mentioned policies for schools, the education agenda requires specific obligations on teachers as well. The second section of this chapter addresses the R.Q.2. and examines the government-mandated roles and responsibilities of teachers including consideration of the Teachers' Standards, the Early Careers and ITT Core Content Frameworks, the objectives of the National Curriculum in its general aspects, and the Ofsted Inspection framework. Furthermore, as this study is empirical in nature, the previous empirical research examining the experiences of teachers with

regards to moral education during their teacher education programs is of great significance. To this end, some of the previous works were reviewed and it was found that the initial teacher education (ITE) programs are inadequate in meeting the requirements outlined in the policies concerning the moral development of students, including PSHE and character education, and in fostering the personal and professional values of teacher candidates. However, most of these studies have focused on candidate teachers and there is a lack of research on the personal and professional development of service teachers in relation to moral education policies. With this in mind, this research aims to address this gap in the literature by gathering the experiences and understandings of service teachers with regard to their pre-service and in-service education, as well as their perceptions of moral education policies. According to professional development theory educators need to possess an in-depth understanding of educational concepts, an awareness of the debates surrounding aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced educational practices, and an ability to engage with educational research. Given the focus of R.Q.2., this theory will be utilized in analysing and discussing the results pertaining to teachers' comprehension of their responsibilities and experiences with both initial and ongoing education initiatives.

The final section addresses the R.Q.3. and considers the potential contributions of various subject areas to moral development of the students. This part in the literature review only includes a specific examination of Religious Education (RE), English, and Physical Education (PE) as representative examples of the requirements for students' moral development. The selection of these subject areas is based on specific considerations. Firstly, moral education has traditionally been incorporated into Religious Education as a part of its curriculum. Secondly, with the secularization notions of education, English literature has been utilized as a means of imparting morals and values, separate from religious morality. Lastly, the policies relating to moral education- such as SMSC, PSHE, and RSE- also encompass the physical development of students, including their health and well-being. Given these factors, it is found crucial to examine the contributions of Religious Education, English, and Physical Education to the moral development of students. However, inclusion of these three subjects does not mean moral education is only limited with these three. In the findings and discussion chapter, other subjects will be evaluated in terms of their potential contribution to moral development of the students from teachers' viewpoints. The four-dimensional taxonomy of character education will be adopted as the theoretical framework for examining teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the possible contributions of different subject areas to students' moral education.

By examining these three sections, I assert that this study endeavours to make a significant contribution to the field of educational research from various aspects. Firstly, it represents a unique

contribution to investigate the understanding and execution of policies relating to moral education by secondary school teachers in the English educational system. Secondly, despite the crucial role teachers play in education, their perceptions and experiences have been largely overlooked in previous literature, with most research being conducted on teacher candidates. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by examining the views and experiences of service teachers in relation to moral education. Thirdly, this study does not limit its scope to a single or a group of subject areas, but rather seeks to gather information and insights from teachers across all subjects at the secondary school level, encompassing key stages 3 and 4, within the context of England. The subsequent chapter will outline the methodological framework and research design employed in this study, with the objective of accomplishing the aims outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This study employs a qualitative research approach to investigate the perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers in England with regards to students' moral development. Semi-structured interviews were designed as the primary data collection method, incorporating stimulus material aimed at enhancing the participants' responses. The stimulus material was employed to demonstrate the relevant policies related to students' moral development in the UK. Due to the limitations posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted virtually via applications such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

While the use of interviews in educational research is a common practice, the utilization of stimulus material within the interview process is relatively rare in this field. Despite this, similar methods such as the use of "artifacts" (Rowse, 2011) in interviews or "object elicitation" (Crilly et al., 2012) have been employed by researchers. My approach in this study differs in that the stimulus material was utilized as a supportive document during the interviews, rather than as an elicitation tool. This unique approach contributes to both the moral education literature and methodology literature in the social sciences.

The present chapter outlines the methodological framework of the study, including the paradigm, research questions, and research design process. Subsequently, the trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations are addressed, followed by a discussion of the analysis process.

Research Questions and Objectives

The research questions play a crucial role in determining the appropriate paradigm and research method. They provide guidance and direction for the study, helping researchers focus and organize the data. According to Bryman (2008), research questions are crucial for students in their research. Creswell (2020) add that research questions help to narrow the study's purpose and focus on specific questions to be addressed. Furthermore, Punch & Oancea (2014) highlight that research questions direct researchers to focus their thinking and organize the data during the planning phase.

The overarching question of this research is: *What are secondary school teachers' perceptions and experiences in teaching moral education in England?*

and there are three additional questions formulated considering the concepts of this research:

RQ1. How do teachers understand moral education both regardless of and regarding to the government policies, and how they implement these policies in their practice?

R.Q.2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their role and responsibilities in the moral education of students, and how do they consider the effectiveness of their professional development experiences related to teaching moral education?

R.Q.3. What potential contributions could different subject areas make to the students' moral development?

This research aimed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of teachers regarding moral education in their professional contexts.

As discussed in Chapter 2, teachers often lack training in moral education during their initial and ongoing education. Hence, it is crucial to investigate the impact of moral education theories and policies on their understanding of the concept of moral education, their roles and responsibilities regarding to it, and their education experiences. This exploration can facilitate an evaluation and redesign of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs to provide adequate theoretical knowledge of moral education. Additionally, the findings can inform the development or refinement of moral education policies to align with the experiences of teachers in terms of implementation.

The objective of this study is to investigate whether teachers can facilitate the moral development of their students through their curriculum by identifying the role of subject areas in teaching moral education. The literature review indicates that teachers are encountering difficulties in providing effective support for their students' moral development due to their workload, emphasis on academic achievements, and lack of designated time and space for teaching moral education. Therefore, integrating moral education into subject areas is critical. By addressing the third research question, teachers can gain awareness of their potential role in moral education within their subject areas. Moreover, the findings of this question can serve as supporting evidence for incorporating moral education into the initial teacher education programs of subject areas.

Therefore, a qualitative approach was adopted for the exploration and analysis of moral education from teachers' own perspectives and experiences. In consideration of the intended research topic and research objectives, qualitative semi-structured interviews were selected as the primary research method.

Research Paradigm

The term paradigm is often used to describe the primary framework in a research study, which outlines the process of identifying problems within the study, as well as the underlying epistemological and methodological assumptions (Hammond & Wellington, 2013). The framework can be divided into four branches, namely ontology, epistemology, methodology, and method (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016) and the most common paradigms are positivism and interpretivism (Ab Rahman, 2019).

In educational research, it is important for researchers to have a philosophical framework that guides and informs their research. Two key factors influencing the research design are epistemology and ontology, which provide insight into the researcher's beliefs about knowledge and reality and the methods used in the research (Al-Ababneh, 2020). The choice of paradigm is crucial for researchers as it determines the knowledge they aim to uncover in the social context of investigation. Both ontology and epistemology play a crucial role in guiding researchers to shape their thoughts on the research problem, its significance, and the approach employed to answer the research questions (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Ontology addresses the question of the nature of reality and its features, described as either realist or relativist (King et al., 2019; Creswell, 2020). According to Litchman (2013), ontology is concerned with reality and the nature of reality; and different researchers may have different realities based on the population they study (Creswell 2020; Litchman, 2013). Ontology is based on both objective and subjective realities (King et al., 2019). Objective reality assumes that the world is made up of objects and structures with cause-and-effect relationships and is often used in quantitative or experimental research in social sciences (King et al., 2019). On the other hand, subjective reality recognises that the world is inhabited by humans with their own thoughts, interpretations, and meanings. Researchers adopting a relativist approach aim to understand these interpretations through questions and answers in their research.

Epistemology, derived from the Greek words "episteme" (knowledge) and "logos" (theory), is the study of knowledge and its basis (Grbich, 2012). It attempts to answer questions about the nature of knowledge, the relationship between the knower and the known, and the approach used in communicating knowledge to others (Punch & Oancea, 2014; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It encompasses the nature and form of knowledge, the way it is acquired, and the method of communicating it to others (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Basit, 2013). The field of epistemology encompasses various paradigms, including positivism, constructionism or interpretivism, post-positivism, and postmodernism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Among these, interpretivism stands out as distinct from

positivism, requiring researchers to delve deeper into applying scientific models to the study of social reality and being influenced by various intellectual traditions.

This study follows the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the qualitative study, which aims to focus on the teachers' opinions, experiences, and inner thoughts, and interpretivist paradigm will be the methodological framework of this research.

The interpretive paradigm

The interpretivist approach places a focus on understanding people's experiences and perspectives, which is crucial in gaining insight into this complex topic. The philosophical outlook aligns with this study on understanding teachers' perspectives and experiences on moral education.

Chambliss and Schutt (2018) argue that it is challenging to understand social truths through scientific methods and that people's perspectives and experiences should be at the centre of research. Similarly, Evans (2007) emphasizes that individuals are conscious and purposeful actors who bring their own ideas and interpretations to the world around them. In this study, the interpretivist approach will be used to gain insight into the reality of teachers' experiences and views on moral education. It is important to note that the participants' interpretations are not considered facts but instead their own perspectives shaped by their experiences (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). The goal of this research is not to generalize beyond a similar context, but instead to explore and understand the participants' experiences for the purpose of improving policy, theory, and practice in this field (Biesta, 2008).

However, the researcher is aware of the limitations of the interpretivist research. It typically focuses on small, specific case studies rather than larger, generalizable samples (Cohen et al., 2018), which can limit the ability to draw broad conclusions or generalize findings. Furthermore, interpretivist research heavily relies on subjective data, such as people's thoughts, feelings, and experiences (Tanweer et al., 2021), which can make it challenging to verify the accuracy or reliability of the data. Additionally, the subjective nature of interpretive research means that the researcher's own biases and interpretations may impact the findings.

Despite these limitations, interpretive research allows for a deep understanding of specific events (Williams, 2019) and provides a range of perspectives and experiences that may not be revealed through other methods. To mitigate the limitations of interpretive research, it is important for researchers to be transparent about their methods and assumptions and to consider multiple perspectives and interpretations. In this research interpretivist approach will be used to gain a deep understanding of the teachers' understanding of and experiences on moral education.

Theoretical Frameworks

Policy Enactment Theory

In this research, I used Ball's policy enactment theory as a theoretical framework to understand the data that was analysed in relation to teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education policies. Stephen Ball's policy enactment theory is a comprehensive framework that explains how policy is implemented in complex organisational contexts such as educational institutions. Rather than being a straightforward top-down procedure, policy implementation, as per Ball and colleagues (2012), is depicted as a dynamic, interactive process involving numerous stakeholders and variables within educational settings.

One critical aspect of Ball's theory emphasizes how policy enactment is often moulded by the interests and agendas of those tasked with its execution, including teachers, school leaders (SLTs), and policymakers (Ball et al., 2012). These stakeholders may interpret and adapt policies to align with their personal values and motivations, potentially deviating from the policy's original intentions. Consequently, the outcomes of such policies may not align with their intended objectives and could lead to unintended consequences.

Moreover, the dynamics among different stakeholders and institutions significantly influence policy enactment. Varied roles, responsibilities, and power dynamics among stakeholders often lead to conflicting interpretations and strategies for policy implementation (Maguire et al., 2020). For instance, teachers and school leaders may have contrasting perspectives on policy directives, influencing their implementation approaches.

Research by Skerritt et al. (2021) exemplifies how differing interpretations among stakeholders impact policy implementation. Varied perceptions, whether positive or negative, influence the degree of support or opposition towards policy enactment (Ball et al., 2012). Additionally, the framing and communication of policies also shape their perception and implementation (Bacchi, 2009), underscoring the importance of considering stakeholders' perspectives in policy analysis (Maguire et al., 2020). It is not enough to simply look at the policy itself, but rather the actions of those responsible for implementing it, as well as how they interpret and translate the policy (Braun et al., 2011), must also be considered in order to fully understand the process of policy enactment and its complex process.

Furthermore, the broader socio-cultural context plays a pivotal role in policy enactment, shaping interpretations and implementation approaches (Ball et al., 2012). Contextual factors such as societal

values and historical backgrounds influence how policies are received and enacted, as evidenced in studies on education access for minority groups (Maguire et al., 2015).

Policy enactment theory further underscores the influence of power dynamics and politics on policy implementation (Ball et al., 2012). The relative power of stakeholders often dictates the policy process and outcomes, leading to conflicts and variations in implementation strategies across different contexts (Johnson et al., 2018).

By employing Ball's policy enactment theory, this study aims to grasp the intricate interplay between stakeholders and contextual factors in shaping policy implementation within educational settings. Additionally, an interpretive approach will be adopted to analyze the data, recognizing the subjective nature of individuals' perceptions and experiences (Creswell, 2020). This approach allows for a holistic examination of participants' perspectives and the meanings attributed to policy enactment in moral education.

Professional Development Theory

Professional Development Theory (PDT) posits that educators should be considered professionals and possess more than just technical and subject knowledge, as argued by Orchard and Winch (2015). PDT emphasizes that teachers need an in-depth understanding of educational concepts, an awareness of debates surrounding educational practices, and the ability to engage with educational research, along with strong ethical reasoning skills to navigate ethical challenges in the classroom. Given significant transformations in teacher training, conventional methods of preparing teachers have been subject to scrutiny, and innovative training initiatives are necessary to enhance the quality of education, according to Oancea and Orchard (2012).

Orchard and Winch (2015) propose that initial teacher education (ITE) programs should focus on equipping aspiring teachers with PDT. This research aims to investigate the experiences of secondary school teachers in pre-service and in-service education to determine if moral education and ethical reflection were incorporated into their training programs. The study will utilize PDT to analyse and discuss the results concerning teachers' comprehension of their responsibilities and experiences with initial and ongoing education initiatives.

Four-dimensional Taxonomy of Character Building

The historical overview presented in this study sheds light on the diverse philosophical theories of moral education that have been proposed. Despite its philosophical foundations, character education

has emerged as a systematic and comprehensive approach to moral education, as posited by Lickona (1991). The four-dimensional taxonomy of character education is of particular significance, as it emphasizes the development of moral, intellectual, performance, and civic virtues.

The current study will utilize the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education as a theoretical framework to investigate teachers' perspectives and experiences on the potential contributions of different subject areas to students' moral education. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues is a distinguished research organization focused on character education in the United Kingdom. Given the Jubilee Centre's innovative contributions to character education in the United Kingdom, their taxonomy will serve as a model for examining various dimensions of the four-dimensional taxonomy.

Research Design

Given the aim of this research to amplify the voices of teachers and elicit their perspectives and experiences in teaching moral education, a qualitative research approach was deemed most appropriate (Hammersley, 2002). This approach would enable a deeper exploration of the teachers' understandings of moral education, their interpretation of policies, and practical experiences. To achieve this aim, semi-structured interviews were selected as the method of data collection, which would facilitate the gathering of in-depth information through a process of mutual communication. However, the COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges, making it unfeasible to conduct face-to-face interviews. In accordance with the Ethics Committee of the university, the research was conducted online. To facilitate the in-depth information gathering desired through semi-structured interviews, a stimulus material consisting of policies related to the moral development of students was developed to improve the online interview process. Before explaining the chosen research method, it is important to note that the research design part of this study was published as a case study at SAGE Research Method Cases as "Conducting Online Interviews with Stimulus Material: Exploring Moral Education Practice with Secondary School Teachers in England" (Tanriverdi Gokceli, 2022).

Instruments

Interviews

In qualitative research, interviews are widely used to collect data (Gray, 2021). Cohen et al. (2018) considers interviews to be a valuable tool that allows participants to play a central role in data generation through conversation. Braun and Clarke (2013) define interviews as conversations aimed at gaining insights into a participant's experiences and perspectives on a topic. This definition fits the purpose of the research, which explored teachers' experiences and perspectives on moral education.

The semi-structured interview was chosen as the data collection tool because it provides flexibility and allows for a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and views (Bryman, 2008). The semi-structured format allowed for an open-ended conversation guided by a set of predetermined questions while also providing room for follow-up questions and exploring the participants' responses further (Knott et al., 2022). The flexibility of the semi-structured interview allowed for rephrasing of questions to ensure clarity for all participants (Deterding and Waters, 2021).

One potential drawback of the semi-structured interview is that it may result in varying responses from participants, which could reduce the comparability of responses (Cohen et al., 2018). To address this, caution was taken when rephrasing questions to avoid changing their meaning. Additionally, as this study is exploratory, all perspectives were considered until data saturation was reached. Another concern with this method is the issue of anonymity (Flick, 2022). To protect the participants' anonymity, pseudonyms were assigned, and specific identifying information was replaced with hashtags in the transcripts.

The interview guide (see Appendix 2) was structured in two parts. The first part included questions about the participants' demographics and closed questions to categorize them and identify patterns relevant to the research. The second part consisted of open-ended questions that allowed participants to share their views and experiences on moral education. This was crucial in gaining a comprehensive understanding of their perspectives and experiences. Participants were first asked about their definition of the concept, then about their motivations and approaches for promoting moral education, and finally about their professional experiences including application of the policies with any challenges and successes they have faced.

The stimulus material

After evaluating the relevant literature, I opted to base my research on the present government policies concerning the moral development of students since it would make sense to teachers while discussing moral education. Therefore, I designed a stimulus material that includes information about the present policies in an attempt to stimulate responses from the teachers and gather deeper knowledge during online interview process.

A stimulus material is a tool used in research to prompt or guide participants in a study. It is often used in qualitative research, particularly in interviews, to help facilitate a conversation and elicit specific information from participants (Hammersley, 2002). The stimulus material can take various forms, such as a questionnaire, a set of open-ended questions, a series of images, or a scenario. The purpose of the stimulus material is to guide the discussion and ensure that the interviewer stays on track, while

still allowing the participant to express their thoughts and experiences in their own words. According to Hammersley (2002), the use of stimulus material can help increase the depth and richness of the data collected and ensure that important topics are covered during the interview. However, it is important to use the stimulus material in a flexible manner, allowing the participant to expand on their responses and discuss topics that may arise naturally during the conversation.

In the realm of education, stimulus material can be used to elicit data regarding teaching techniques, teachers' viewpoints, and student experiences (Hammersley, 2002). However, although there is some study in the field of health and social care, I have not seen any research in the field of education that applies stimulus material to interviews. Therefore, this research will make a methodological contribution to the field of education by using stimulus material to gather information about teachers' understanding and implementations of the moral education policies.

For the design of the interview questions, I began with a broad aim of the teachers' understanding of moral education and how they feel about their responsibilities in student's moral development. Then moved on to more focused questions about their experiences in teaching moral education within their school settlement and specifically within their subject areas. I applied the stimulus material when asking about their knowledge and implementations of the moral education policies. I created the stimulus material utilising the internet presentation programme Prezi in order to spark conversation and elicit more thoughtful replies from the participants regarding the regulations. The names or abbreviations of the relevant policies were provided as bubbles on the first page of the stimulus material, with full information accessible by clicking on each bubble. I developed the questions and stimulus material in this manner to ensure that the participants utilised their time efficiently and to assess their policy knowledge. The interview questions and stimulus material are available in Appendix 2 and 8, respectively.

Sampling and Participants

Initially, I had planned to obtain approval and support from headteachers of schools in order to recruit teachers for my research. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the headteachers were preoccupied with adjusting school protocols and processes, and I did not receive an adequate response. As a result, I altered my approach and opted to employ a snowball sampling method. This approach involves relying on the target contacts to identify potential participants and solicit their participation and referral of the research to their friends, colleagues, or other associates (Cohen et al., 2017). This method enables the researcher to start with a small number of participants and gradually increase their sample size.

Snowball sampling is a method of collecting data used in qualitative research (Ellis, 2021). In this method, researchers gather participants through referrals from other participants who have already participated or have been recruited for the study (Muzari et al., 2022). This technique is useful in situations where access to the study population is restricted, such as during the second lockdown when all schools were closed (Cohen et al., 2018). Additionally, snowball sampling has the potential to create a diverse and representative sample even in dispersed populations, making it an efficient method of recruitment (Cohen et al., 2018).

In this particular study, I utilised my social network to identify a small number of participants and asked them to refer other secondary school teachers from variety of subject areas who may be interested in participating. In some instances, individuals referred themselves and expressed their interest in participating, while in other cases, I initiated contact with them by sending study invitations via email. The invitation email can be found in Appendix 4.

The sample of secondary school teachers in England is considered to be a purposeful sample and I recruited anyone who was willing to participate without considering specific factors such as type of school or professional position (Cohen et al., 2018). However, other variables such as length of service, ethnicity, age, and others were recorded to identify patterns, themes, and commonalities, as listed in Appendix 9. The only requirement for participation was that the participants were currently working as secondary school teachers in England.

Given the unique challenges that teachers and researchers were facing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, in-person interviews were not possible and were replaced by remote interviews conducted via video or telephone conference using various applications such as Skype, Zoom, Teams, or WhatsApp (per the BREO approval letter, discussed in the ethical section).

In total, 18 secondary school teachers were recruited using the snowball approach, which was considered a convenient sample for this study. The teachers are from various subject areas, including maths, science, religious education, physical education, English, history, geography, psychology, modern foreign languages; and from different school types, including grammar, faith, mainstream schools, and academies. Also, more personal information was collected, including gender, age, years of experience, and position of the teachers, which may affect the interpretation of the data. The details of the classification can be found in Appendix 9.

Process

To recruit participants for the research, a snowball approach was adopted (Cohen et al., 2017). After teachers agreed to participate in the study, the preferred audio-visual application for the interview was asked, and the options of Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, and WhatsApp were suggested. The participants chose Zoom and Microsoft Teams as they were familiar with these applications due to their online teaching experiences. The interview dates and times were arranged and organized using Outlook Calendar to avoid any overlap. The recordings were made using Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and a recording app on the computer.

Prior to conducting the interviews, a pilot test was conducted with a secondary school teacher in the United Kingdom to test the interview questions, stimulus material, audio-visual and recording applications, and microphone and headphones.

During the interviews, the participants were asked to provide their consent for their participation and the recording process through a consent form that was approved by the Ethics committee of the researcher's faculty. The link to the stimulus material was also sent to the participants 10 minutes before the interview, and they were requested not to look at it until prompted during the interview.

The interviews were conducted online, and the researcher arranged all the necessary software and interview materials on their laptop. Background noise was minimized to ensure effective concentration and clear recording. The interviews were voice recorded, and the researcher took minimal notes while focusing on capturing important points and asking follow-up questions.

The estimated time for the interviews was 30-60 minutes, and the availability of the participants was asked while arranging the interviews. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher read a summary statement of their research, explained the interview process, and made it clear that the participants could withdraw at any time.

The data was collected between November 2020 and February 2021. After the interviews completed, the researchers transcribed the interviews verbatim and NVIVO, a qualitative analysis software, was used to code and analyse the data.

The Implementation of the Stimulus Material

After the starting questions of teachers understanding of moral education, the stimulus material was applied to open up the discussions of their understanding and implication of the policies regarding to the moral development of the students. The link of the stimulus material through PREZI software was

shared just before each interview, which does not require any registration or download process. As the participants just saw the material during the interview process their reactions to the stimulus material and questions about policies were also noted (see Appendix 8).

During the interview process, there were no difficulties encountered by participants with regards to the comprehension of questions. However, there were some challenges experienced with the utilization of the prepared stimulus material. Some older participants encountered difficulties in accessing or using the material, and as a result, I had to resort to sharing my screen and presenting the material from my laptop. However, I found screen-sharing approach to be time-consuming and ineffective as participants could not interact with the document. To address this issue, I transformed the material into a PDF format and shared it with the participants along with a Prezi link. This resolved the problem, but I anticipate that the use of PDF may not have been as effective as the use of an interactive format. The interactive stimulus material allows teachers to quickly learn about policies by clicking on the bubbles they wish to understand. This enables them to review policies efficiently without having to go through parts they are already familiar with. On the other hand, in the PDF format, participants may need to spend more time searching for the information they require as the entire policy is listed, and the complete text may give the impression of excessive information, potentially leading to feelings of being overwhelmed. However, given the small number of the participants (n:3) faced the difficulty of accessing the link, the use of interactive stimulus material was found very effective to gather deeper knowledge about the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the moral education policies.

Trustworthiness

The philosophical approach taken in this research raises concerns regarding trustworthiness in qualitative research, which must be addressed (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this study, the researcher acts as the main tool of inquiry and is at the centre of the interpretation of lived experiences and meanings (Letherby et al., 2014). Since interpretations are based on the researcher's own experiences and biases (Mohajan, 2018), it is likely that different understandings of the subject will emerge. Therefore, trustworthiness is an important consideration in qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Ensuring the validity and reliability of qualitative research requires a focus on trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this research, the categories of trustworthiness proposed by Guba (1989) – credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability – were used to promote rigor in the study. These categories provide alternative methods to evaluate qualitative studies and ensure their

processes are trustworthy (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). According to Terrell (2016), there are various ways to achieve each of these categories, which will be discussed in more detail below.

To establish credibility, Terrell (2016) suggests various methods, including "*prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer-debriefing, and member checking*" (p.174). This study utilized prolonged engagement by verifying transcriptions several times and spending a significant amount of time with the transcripts. Persistent observation was achieved by reaching data saturation in terms of the depth and quantity of data collected. Peer-debriefing was facilitated through the support of supervisors and input from colleagues. Member checking, which is the most important form of credibility according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), was carried out through follow-up appointments with participants to review their interview transcripts and coding.

Transferability, similar to the positivist concept of generalizability, refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other similar contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). However, since perspectives and experiences cannot be generalized, they may only be representative of a portion of the population (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). To establish transferability, the social setting and context of the phenomenon must be thoroughly described (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The demographic of participants and the type of school they work in were established in the initial interviews to outline the context and setting.

Dependability is another aspect of trustworthiness, but it can be challenging to capture in exploratory studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this research, a focus on credibility was considered sufficient to establish dependability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The consistency of the research methods also helped to ensure dependability, as the same semi-structured interview questions were used throughout the study.

Confirmability, the objective of the researcher, is difficult to achieve in interpretive research as any claim to objectivity among interpretivist researchers is almost impossible (Cohen et al., 2018). Subjectivity, which refers to personal biases, experiences, and perspectives of the researcher, can influence the design, execution, and interpretation of research studies (Letherby et al., 2014). Foucault's subjectivity theory applies to both the researcher and participants, who interpret their own experiences and perspectives at a specific time and place (Foucault, 1974). The perspective of the researcher or participant is shaped by their background, identity, beliefs, and location in time and space (Heyes, 2010). This research adopted an interpretivist approach and therefore does not claim objectivity in regard to the research processes or findings. The researcher's subjectivity influenced the research processes, which align with the qualitative methodology employed.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, it is necessary to consider the ethical implications of the study, as highlighted by Chambliss and Schutt (2018). This section will outline the ethical considerations that were taken into account during the course of the research. Firstly, ethical approval was obtained from the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences at Brunel University London, but ethical considerations go beyond just completing the necessary paperwork and getting approval (Hammersley, 2008). The research process involves various ethical dilemmas, such as the political choice of the research topic, ethical issues surrounding social relations, access, data collection, power dynamics, and confidentiality and anonymity (Hammersley and Traianou, 2014).

The choice of the research topic is also subject to ethical considerations, as the topic was selected based on the researcher's personal and professional experiences, which advocate for moral education. The British Educational Research Association (BERA) states that educational research should be conducted with an ethical principle of respect for individuals involved in the research, treating them fairly, sensitively, with dignity and freedom from prejudice (BERA, 2018).

To maintain ethical social relations, it is important to obtain voluntary informed consent from participants, which allows individuals to make decisions for themselves and have control over their own lives (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Prior to conducting an interview, the participants were required to sign a consent form (Appendix 6) and were informed of their right to refuse participation at (Brooks et al., 2014). A detailed information sheet was also given to all participants to inform them of the purpose of the research and the way it will be conducted (Huang et al., 2021). Throughout the interview, participants were reminded that they could stop at any time and had the right to refuse to answer any question. The interview questions (Appendix 2), the stimulus material (see Appendix 8), the consent form (see Appendix 6), and information sheet (see Appendix 5) were designed according to BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational research (2018) and approved by the Ethics Committee of Brunel University London (Appendix 7).

The ethical considerations surrounding access to participants were also taken into account. Participation was voluntary, and with the use of snowball sampling, the participants themselves made the first contact with the researcher, avoiding any potential refusals to participate (Campbell and Groundwater-Smith, 2007). However, as stated by BERA, participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, and the researcher must inform them of this right (BERA, 2018). The information sheet clearly stated that participants could withdraw at any time during the process and had the right to withdraw their data prior to dissemination (Reid et al., 2018).

Finally, confidentiality and anonymity are of utmost importance in this research, as the confidential and anonymous treatment of participants' data is considered the norm for conducting research (BERA, 2018). I was well aware that the personal information and real-life personal accounts obtained during the research may be sensitive items for participants (Farrow, 2016) and took all measures to preserve these items in a confidential and anonymous manner including using pseudonym names.

Analysis

Before starting the analysis process, all the interviews transcribed verbatim, attached anonymous names and uploaded to the NVivo software for the organisation and analysis steps. Organizing and classifying collected data is a crucial step in qualitative data analysis, as it enables the establishment of a systematic process for findings (Neuman, 2014). Thematic coding was employed to facilitate this process, allowing researchers to review and revise earlier stages of the research, if needed, and potentially alter the direction (Charmaz, 2006; Neuman, 2014). Thematic coding was used to identify categories and understand the relationships between them. Strauss's three types of coding strategy - open coding, axial coding, and selective coding - were utilized in the process (Strauss, 1987, cited in Neuman, 2014).

Open coding, as the initial stage of coding, allows for data to be transformed into categories or codes by coding line-by-line, sentence or paragraph, or by scanning the entire document, depending on the researcher's preference. This stage helps the researcher identify missing data (Charmaz, 2006; Birks and Mills, 2015). Axial coding, in the second stage, is an analytic process that makes links between the codes identified in open coding and discovers the main analytical categories. In the final stage, selective coding examines the specific themes identified in previous codes by selecting the main categories and connecting other categories to them (Neuman, 2014; Charmaz, 2006; Birks and Mills, 2015). The most important findings were subsequently selected and discussed in the findings and discussion chapters.

To assist in the coding and analysis process, the NVivo12 software was utilized, which is widely used as a qualitative data analysis software, as it helps researchers handle and analytically separate various sources of information about the cases, such as interview transcripts and videos (Gibbs, 2017). The ability to compare different cases and handle significant amounts of data makes the usage of NVivo particularly important for researchers (Gibbs, 2017). Additionally, text and word query aid the researcher in finding the research codes with ease and allow for codes to be seen in separate files and compared if necessary. see Appendix 3 for the themes emerged from the research questions of this study.

Conclusion

The present study adheres to the ontological and epistemological principles of qualitative research, which is focused on exploring the perceptions, experiences, and inner thoughts of teachers in relation to the moral development of secondary school students in England. The interpretive paradigm serves as the methodological framework for this study.

Data collection was carried out through semi-structured online interviews, supplemented by stimulus material created by the researcher, which highlights current government policies on moral education. This research not only aims to contribute to the literature in the field of education, but also to the methodology literature in the social sciences, with the utilization of stimulus material within the interview process as a distinctive tool.

A total of 18 secondary school teachers from diverse subject areas were interviewed using online semi-structured interviews, and the collected data was analysed using the qualitative analysis software NVivo, through the application of thematic coding. The results of the analysis will be presented and discussed in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion: Teachers' Perceptions of Moral Education and Enactment of Regarding Policies

Introduction

The objective of this section is to address the research question one, *“How do teachers understand moral education both regardless of and regarding to the government policies, and how they implement these policies in their practice?”*

The participants provide their distinct explications of moral education both from definitional and policy perspectives. In the initial segment of this chapter, the teachers' interpretations of moral education are explored in order to demonstrate their perceptions of this notion. The second section examines the teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the moral education policies as these factors may influence their comprehension of the concept of moral education through the lens of policy enactment theory.

Considering the possible connections between moral education theories and their perceptions, their teachers' definitions of moral education encompass the following themes:

- Teaching Christian morals
- Development of autonomy
- Teaching shared values and promoting social cohesion
- Character building

The themes regarding teachers' familiarity with policies related to moral education are as follows:

- SMSC
- PSHE and RSHE
- Citizenship education
- FBVs
- Character education

Additionally, these themes are expected to make a noteworthy contribution towards addressing the primary research question regarding the teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education.

Teachers' Understandings of Moral Education independent of Policy Requirements

My own prior experience of teaching moral education as required by governmental regulations without sufficient knowledge of pertinent moral education theories served as a key motivating factor for utilizing government policies as a central framework while examining teachers' perceptions of moral education. Hence, in order to ascertain whether the participants shared a similar comprehension or background to my own, the interviews were initiated by querying the participants' individual interpretations of moral education. At this stage, no mention was made of any governmental requirements or policies.

In Chapter 2, an account of the historical progression of moral education theories was provided. The present section seeks to investigate whether a correlation exists between the theories of moral education and the participants' understanding and definitions of the concept, with the aim of ascertaining the extent to which they are cognizant of these theoretical constructs. The presentation of moral education theories follows a chronological order, beginning with instruction in religious morality (Bazarlukov, 2008), followed by the teaching of secular and liberal morals in a pluralistic society (Carr, 1999) with the emphasis on the development of autonomy and avoidance of indoctrination (Carr, 1999; Hirst, 1974), exploration and justification of individual values, beliefs, and thoughts - including Kohlbergian moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1981) and Values clarification (Raths et al., 1966) approaches -, promotion of community cohesion and teaching of shared values (Haydon 2006; Halstead, 2005), and finally character education focused on cognitive, affective, and behavioural morality. In considering the responses of the participants, I followed the same sequence.

Teaching Christian (religious) morals

Among 18 teachers, two teachers, Robert, and Martin, defined moral education with teaching religious, mainly Christian, values and morals, and one other teacher, Sera, mentioned teaching Christian morals are part of moral education for whom having an interest in faith.

Although Robert did not explicitly state that the objective of moral education is to teach Christian values or morals, he included Christian values when describing moral education, such as "loving our neighbour", "treating your neighbour as you would like to be treated yourself," and "looking after those that are most vulnerable." However, he did not confine moral education solely to Christian values. In addition, he listed *equality, diversity, and anti-racism* as part of moral education, contending that the acquisition of these values and morals can lead students to "*make the world a better place.*"

If we send young people out with good values and good morals, and forgetting about to some degree about some of the academic qualifications that they'll get here, every

time they act in a certain way towards someone else, the world becomes a bit better, and we see that as our moral crusade. (Robert, Teacher of Physical Education and Head of School)

On the other hand, Martin described moral education as *“shaping of students' understanding of virtue and morality”* in line with Christian values as they are Church school.

And we have a big focus in my school on character education... But it's also as a Church school, it kind of sits in line with Christian values, as well. And we focus on compassion, and justice and humility, and courage. (Martin, Teacher of Religious Education)

Both Robert and Martin are working at Christian faith schools, which would be the reason they mentioned Christian values and morals as part of moral education. Although she is not working in a Christian school, Sera (Geography) stated that what students would learn through religious education is part of her moral education definition. She expressed that she is a practicing Christian and so Christian values and morals are part of moral education for whom having an interest in faith.

However, although they defined moral education with Christian values and morals, they did not prioritize these faith-based morals as the primary objective of moral education, nor did they intend to indoctrinate these Christian morals. Furthermore, none of them alluded to knowledge of moral education theories that focus on religious instruction or any pressure from Church authority. Therefore, it would not be reasonable to equate these teachers' perception of moral education with religious instruction, as stated in section 2.2., Chapter 2. Instead, it could be posited that their Christian background, whether personal or professional, influenced their understanding of moral education.

Development of Autonomy (Moral Reasoning and Values Clarification)

Interestingly, none of the teachers explicitly mentioned secular or liberal values while defining moral education, though five of them mentioned development of autonomy or making informed judgements as part of it, which was seen as one of the main aims of education in liberalist theory (Carr, 1999). According to this theory, schools should develop people's knowledge and skills to make their own decisions about how to live, who they should be, what goals to pursue, what to produce, what to consume, and so on; and should avoid any kind of indoctrination effecting people's spiritual, social, or economic ways of living (Carr, 1999).

Adam and Julia expressed that when opportunities arise, they have moral conversations with the students and help them understand *‘how to make their own mind up about what they believe or not believe’* (Julia, Teacher of PE) and *‘how to make the right decisions for themselves’* (Adam, Teacher of

PE, and Psychology). In addition to that, David was drawing students' attention to the different ways of lives.

It means making sure that students are aware that there are choices that people make in life that can be perceived in different ways... not necessarily you're teaching students to make those choices, but we're giving them the skills to weigh up an argument and make their own evaluation. (David, Teacher of Geography and RE).

Differently, Jennifer's understanding of moral education was more focused on avoidance of imposing personal choices. She stated that she is teaching morality through judgement and using evidence.

We don't want to impose our opinions on children. But obviously, if students are coming to the wrong conclusions, we challenge them on that. We give the children evidence, and we like the students to make their own opinions based on the evidence in front of them. (Jennifer, Teacher of History and RE)

Alternatively, Jane's articulation of moral justifications appears akin to Kohlberg's final stage of moral reasoning, in which individuals possess the ability to formulate self-determined moral principles and values that are both abstract and universal (Kohlberg, 1981). However, Jane did not mention discussion of moral dilemmas or community values.

While we are talking about beliefs or values, we want all the students to make a judgement of their own beliefs or values, for them to understand the basic sort of beliefs and make well informed judgments, something like justice or self-care. (Jane, Teacher of Maths and Economics)

During the discussion of moral education, neither Jane nor any other participant referred to moral reasoning, Kohlberg, value clarification approaches, or any other theorist in the field such as Wilson, McPhail, or Hand, despite five of them articulating making moral judgements. As a result, it is not appropriate to conflate these teachers' perspectives on moral education with the approaches advocated by Kohlberg, Rath et al., or other theories.

Teaching shared values and promoting social cohesion

Four teachers (Julia, Laila, Robert, Rita) expressed contributing the wider society is the main goal of moral education, while five teachers (Laila, Adam, Leena, David, Jennifer) stated passing on the community values is the goal.

Julia expressed that teaching about right and wrong and making moral judgements are moral education with the aim of contributing the society.

It is about the trying to encourage the children to understand the difference between right and wrong, to also understand how you arrive at a decision about your own beliefs and whether something is right or wrong. Also, how that contributes to wider society, so an understanding of morality must fit into what society's understanding of the difference between right and wrong is. And so, there's obviously lots of shades of grey in between, but it is about helping them to understand where they fit into that and how to make their own mind up about what they believe or do not believe. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

Julia's expression seems parallel to the shared values approach in moral education. Haydon (2006) suggests that schools must help students investigate societal values and form their own moral judgments to promote social cohesion. Moreover, according to Halstead (2005) and Haydon (2006), determining what is right or wrong can be subjective or objective, relative or absolute. Therefore, students' moral development should include not only personal reflection but also respect for others' choices. While Julia's ideas on moral education resembled those of Haydon (2006) and Halstead (2005), she did not explicitly refer to any moral education theories. Rather, Julia explained that the ethos of their school's philosophy is the basis for her perspective.

Robert's understanding of moral education aligns with the goal of helping students become good individuals who understand societal challenges and community values, and he believes that the school's ethos shares this aim, as stated in his quote: "moral education is about students understanding societal challenges and bringing school values into the outside world, whether through raising a family or leadership positions."

Laila, Jennifer, and Rita articulated that moral education is about teaching how to be 'functioning' and 'good' members of the society. Laila (MFL Teacher) underscored the importance of instilling values that cultivate the qualities required to be considered a responsible member of society. She emphasized the idea that these values are essential for guiding individuals in their journey to becoming socially conscientious citizens. Furthermore, Jennifer (History and RE Teacher) echoed the sentiment expressed by Laila. She emphasized that moral education goes beyond merely imparting values; it also encompasses teaching individuals the fundamental principles of being a compassionate and productive human being. Jennifer's viewpoint highlights the multifaceted nature of moral education, encompassing both societal responsibility and personal character development.

Nonetheless, there was no connection made between their description and either relevant theories or their school's ethos. Only Jennifer expressed that the government's expectations are key to her way of thinking. On the other hand, Adam and Leena shared the perspective that moral education involves instilling the values of the community in students. Leena underscored the importance of passing on community values through daily interactions in the classroom, as not all students have the opportunity

to gain experience outside of school. Adam maintained that moral education is about the fundamental values that they want to instil in their students to make them decent global citizens, which aligns with their school's ethos.

It's probably what some people would refer to as the soft curriculum in schools. So, you are not going to find a program of study and lesson plans on it essentially. But it's the moral fabric of what schools try to teach their students through the ethos of the school and through the school's values and vision in how the relationships are developed between teachers and students in the school, and parents, governors, and stakeholders. And how we speak to students about issues, our daily interactions with students, how we conduct ourselves as teachers, as role models, and the language that we use affect students' development. (Adam, Teacher of Psychology and PE).

Despite sharing the belief that moral education involves transmitting shared values and contributing to society, none of the teachers established a direct link between this understanding and moral education theories. While Adam, Robert, and Julia mentioned their school's ethos as a basis for their views, Jennifer attributed her perspective to government policies.

Character building

Six teachers acknowledged that character development is a crucial aspect of moral education. While four teachers did not reference their school's policies, two teachers specifically noted that their school prioritizes character education, which may explain why they see a strong connection between moral education and character building. Leena, Mariam, Denis, and Kate stated that moral education includes building the character or personality of the children.

Leena (Science) underscored the need to ensure that the educational content benefits students in building their personalities. She implied that character development is intertwined with the educational process.

Kate (English) elaborated on the idea that moral education goes beyond merely imparting knowledge about morals and worldviews. She emphasized the role of character development, particularly through teaching resilience and the acceptance of failure, as integral to the educational process.

Robert expressed that their Catholic school prioritizes Christian virtues to cultivate students' character and foster their critical thinking skills, urging them to challenge established views, ideas, and norms.

I would tie morality into the values and virtues that we like to see in our students and that would be things which might range everything in our Catholic school, from a kind of altruistic nature to treating your neighbour as you would like to be treated yourself. (Robert, Teacher of PE)

Martin, on the other hand, revealed that his school places a strong emphasis on character education and employs the language of virtues, drawing inspiration from Aristotle. He highlighted the values of compassion, justice, humility, and courage as integral to their character education approach.

I think, a school plays a role in shaping the moral understanding of the students and we have a big focus in my school on character education, and we talk in the language of virtues, and which is kind of a bit Aristotle, isn't it? But it's also as a Church school, it kind of sits in line with Christian values as well. We focus on compassion, justice, humility, and courage, and we have got a set of virtues that we developed with the students. (Martin, Teacher of RE).

All six teachers recognized that character development is a critical component of moral education. Although Leena, Mariam, Denis, and Kate did not mention their school's policies, Robert and Martin specifically stated that their school places a premium on character education. However, except for Martin, who related moral education to Aristotelian virtues, none of the teachers referred character education approach while talking about building character or personality. Nonetheless, Robert and Martin's emphasis on the meaningful relationship between Christian virtues and character development in their schools may provide a rationale for their conception of moral education.

Impact of Policies on Teachers' Understanding of Moral Education

Except for Martin, who drew a connection between moral education and Aristotelian virtues, none of the teachers mentioned any moral education theories in their definitions of moral education. In contrast, eight teachers expounded that they teach moral education through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons indicating that their perception of moral education is influenced by government guidelines, which is similar to my experience. Moreover, Sera, Michael, and Martin expressed that what students learn through RE, history, and drama is also moral education as these subjects are discussion oriented. As the analysis and discussion of the subject areas will be presented in detail in Chapter 6, I will not elaborate on the teachers' articulation of subject areas in teaching moral education in this section.

David, teacher of Geography and RE, expressed that the government has established rigid guidelines concerning moral education, which they abide by. Additionally, he mentioned the importance of fostering open discussions with students regarding moral education, particularly with regard to the delivery of Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education. Also, Jennifer, a teacher of History and RE, asserted that moral education is deeply embedded in their curriculum across all subjects. She further elaborated that their aim is to teach good moral values in students that they may not necessarily learn at home. Mariam, a teacher of Psychology, revealed that she had not encountered

the term moral education before. However, she speculated that it may pertain to character development or morality, likely in relation to the PSHE curriculum.

In this chapter, the theoretical framework of Ball's policy enactment theory was employed to understand the data regarding teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education policies. Policy enactment is often influenced by the interests and agendas of the implementors, and this study focuses on the understanding of teachers as the primary implementors of moral education policies (Ball et al., 2012). According to policy enactment theory, policies can affect teachers' understanding of a concept in several ways, including symbolic adoption, creating new expectations and standards, and creating new professional development opportunities (Ball, 1998; Ball et al., 2012). Symbolic adoption is an essential concept within policy enactment theory and refers to the ways that policies are used to signal values, beliefs, and priorities within an education system, which can impact how teachers understand and interpret the concepts that policies are meant to address (Ball, 1998). In the case of this research, it seems that the national policies and official guidelines seem to have an impact on teachers' understanding of moral education. It is noteworthy that the teachers referred to government guidelines, curriculum, or PSHE lessons before I inquired about their perceptions or experiences of moral education policies and before presenting the stimulus material for the discussion. The teachers' reference to the guidelines or curriculum in their response to the question regarding their comprehension of moral education indicates that the policies have had some influence on their understanding of this concept. The subsequent section will examine, within the framework of policy enactment theory, the impact of these policies on teachers' comprehension of moral education, as well as how teachers interpret and implement these policies.

Teachers' understanding and experiences of Moral Education Policies

As noted in the Introduction and Methodology chapters, stimulus material was created to provide insight into teachers' comprehension and implementation of current government policies on students' moral development. This material was developed based on my personal experience as a teacher in comprehending moral education through policy frameworks. The objective was to assess the extent of teachers' knowledge and understanding of these policies, as well as their experiences with policy implementation. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the preceding section, policies appear to have a more substantial influence on teachers' perceptions of moral education than moral education theories.

Following the inquiry into their general perception of moral education, the teachers were also asked about their comprehension of the government's expectations and requirements concerning students' moral development, without any reference to specific policy. Although most teachers seem to have

knowledge of the general objectives of the policies, there were some who indicated a lack of awareness regarding them.

As reported by eight teachers (Robert, Adam, Mariam, Rita, Denis, Matthew, Martin, and Kate), they are aware of the Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) syllabus due to its inclusion in their school policy. They believe that the PSHE curriculum satisfies the policy requirements regarding moral education. Furthermore, they affirmed that the PSHE programs incorporate topics such as British values, Citizenship, Relationships, and sex education, SMSC, and character education. Martin, a teacher of RE, for example, reinforces the interconnectedness of moral education, SMSC, Character education, and British values, emphasizing the central role played by the PSHE curriculum in delivering these aspects. Adam also stated a similar point with Martin,

So, SMSC, British values, citizenship, that will tie into our PHSE curriculum. We've got a sort of spreadsheet where we're able to map the provision for all those things. So, we know that we are statutory compliant. (Adam, Teacher of PE, and Psychology)

Leena, David, and Chris expressed that they are aware of the primary objective of the government's moral education policies, which is to eliminate discrimination and promote respect for the diversity of British society, and they endorse this concept.

The government support the idea of no discrimination. This is a country where the government support all types of ethnicities, religion, and it is a country where you feel free. You feel that you can be whoever you want and the government support that. And I see a very supportive government in terms of freedom and values. The government is doing well in that matter. (Chris, Teacher of MFL)

Laila, Mariam, and Sera articulated that they are unfamiliar with moral education policies. Laila and Mariam acknowledged that they are unaware of any policies related to moral education, apart from her school's PSHE program. On the other hand, Sera mentioned that as she does not have a tutor group for a while, she is not aware of the up-to-date policies. Despite expressing their lack of awareness of the policies, these three teachers referred to their school's PSHE program. Additionally, all participants discussed the school's ethos (or the values and virtues that they hold dear in their schools) when discussing moral education policies.

The policies expressed by the participants indicated that the policies employed to structure moral education in this research align with their understandings of said policies, with just one exemption: citizenship. While much of the research focuses on a singular policy (Busher et al., 2019; Foley et al., 2013; Jerome et al., 2019; Morrison, 2009; Simon and Ward, 2010), a combination of policies, including SMSC, PSHE, citizenship education, FBVs, RSE, and character education, was utilized in this research

as they were found to be interconnected with moral education. During the interviews, while discussing participants' awareness of policies, and through the subsequent data analysis, it became apparent that the policies mentioned by the teachers prior to examining the stimulus material were precisely the same policies that were utilized in the framework of this research.

Ball *et al.* (2012) articulated that there is an expectation that schools and teachers possess the knowledge and capability to implement numerous policies, some of which may be conflicting, that have been developed for them by external entities. They are also responsible for fulfilling this obligation and may be held liable for their performance (Ball *et al.*, 2012). It is evident that the participating teachers possess a partial or complete understanding of the government's policies of SMSC, PSHE, citizenship, FBVs, RSE, and character education. I will now examine their perceptions and experiences with these policies individually according to their responses to the stimulus material which included names and summary of the prementioned policies.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC)

The Education Reform Act of 1988 introduced the requirement for schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that includes spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental, and physical development (HMSO, 1988). In 1999, National Curriculum Handbook for Teachers was published with the aims and values for schools to consider while developing their curriculum, including the aims regarding to spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) education (DfEE and QCA, 1999). The framework was later expanded and developed further by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in 2007 (QCA, 2007). Since then, SMSC has become an important aspect of education in England, with schools being inspected on their provision of SMSC as part of the Ofsted inspection framework. The framework requires schools to demonstrate how they are promoting students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development and preparing them for life in modern Britain (Ofsted, 2015). It is a framework that aims to promote the personal development of students in these four areas, alongside their academic progress (Ofsted, 2019/5).

The aims of SMSC are for students to explore beliefs and experiences, respect different faiths, feelings, and values, recognize right from wrong, respect the law, use a range of social skills, participate in the local community, appreciate diverse viewpoints, appreciate cultural influences, understand, and accept diversity, participate in cultural opportunities, and show respect for different faiths, ethnicities, and socio-economic groups (Ofsted, 2015). Furthermore, Ofsted inspectors will document any supporting evidence that aids in comprehending if the school's curriculum and broader activities promote character development (Ofsted, 2019/5). Given that all aspects of SMSC are strongly tied to

moral education by supporting students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, it has been added to the stimulus material to be used for discussion.

When asked whether SMSC is included in their school curriculum and whether they consider it a part of moral education, almost all of the participant teachers (n: 16) responded that they know SMSC requirements, at least partially, and cover it within PSHE curriculum, form time, relevant subject areas, or as part of their school curriculum. Just two teachers, Chris and Sera, expressed that they are not familiar with SMSC, and Mariam said that she only heard of it from staff training. Since SMSC includes moral development in it, all teachers found it as part of moral education.

In terms of the spiritual aspect of SMSC, except Robert (Teacher of PE and Head of school) and Jenifer (Teacher of History and RE) none of the teachers mentioned it as part of their teaching within their subject areas, including RE, or their school programmes.

As a Catholic school, obviously we've got spirituality angle and we've got our chaplaincy that works hard with regards to that moral message that comes from the Bible. But also, we pride ourselves on kind of living the moral values of DB [founder of the school], we talk about religion here in our school. (Robert, Teacher of PE, and Head of the school)

The relationships between different actors and institutions also play a significant role in shaping policy enactment. Actors with different roles, responsibilities, and levels of power may have different perspectives and interpretations of a policy, which can lead to conflicts and struggles over its implementation (Maguire *et al.*, 2020). Robert's expression of working in a Catholic school with a strong tie with morals of Bible seem to play an important role in their approach to spiritual education. Jennifer, similarly, stated that in history subject they have topics related to religious areas, so they touch the spiritual aspect a little bit. Unfortunately, the data did not allow me to make further examination about how they teach spiritual aspect in their school or within their subject areas.

Laila, Julia, Mariam, and Rita articulated that the spiritual aspect of SMSC is missing in their schools. The other thirteen participants did not even mention spiritual education.

policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts. Part of their texts will be rejected, selected out, ignored, deliberately misunderstood, responses may be frivolous, etc. (Bowe and Ball, 1992, p. 22)

As Bowe and Ball (1992) stated, the spiritual education seems to be ignored, or may be rejected, by all teachers other than Robert. Laila and Rita, on the other hand, seem to misunderstand or misinterpret the spiritual education (Ball *et al.*, 2012). Laila stated that as they are not a religious

school, so they do not teach spiritual aspect. Rita, on the other hand, expressed the diversity of her school as the reason for not providing spiritual education. According to the School Inspection Handbook, pupils demonstrate their spiritual development by being reflective about their beliefs, religious or otherwise, and 'respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values' showing an interest in learning about others and the world, and using creativity and reflection in their learning (Ofsted, 2015). It is clear that spiritual aspect of SMSC includes teaching beliefs, feelings, and values of individuals regardless of their religious or ethnic background. However, Laila and Rita's expressions show that they miss this explanation while talking about spiritual education.

The School Inspection Handbook states that pupils' moral development is evidenced by their ability to distinguish between right and wrong, respect the law, understand the consequences of their actions, investigate moral and ethical issues and offer reasoned views, and appreciate diverse viewpoints (Ofsted, 2015). Nine teachers articulated that they are teaching about right and wrong, while only Julia (teacher of PE) referring SMSC requirements. Other eight teachers did not mentioned SMSC curriculum while talking about teaching right and wrong.

Julia highlighted the incorporation of SMSC principles in PE, emphasizing the importance of moral understanding, respecting the law, and comprehending consequences within the context of the SMSC program. Other teachers, such as Jane and Adam, reiterated the moral duty to engage students in conversations about morality and guide them in making ethical decisions.

It is our moral duty to make sure that when opportunities arise, that we do have those conversations with students, and we do educate them on how to be moral and make the right decisions. (Adam, Teacher of Psychology and PE)

Eight teachers articulated that they teach some aspects of SMSC within their subject curriculum, including moral. When Kate said:

In literature, you are always exploring all these areas, you cannot really study a literary text without exploring those things. You create a space where pupils can debate and analyse what is moral or what was moral than, and all those different sorts of factors could be dealt with in my field. (Kate, Teacher of English)

She expressed that literature is a great place where aspects of SMSC can be covered as it gives students and opportunity to explore different lives, worldviews, beliefs, values, and norms in the society then and now. Similarly, Jenifer stated that she is teaching all aspects of SMSC within history and RE, David said they teach aspects of SMSC within humanities subjects, and Mariam expressed teaching moral aspects, especially ethics, in psychology.

Similarly, Jenifer, David, and Mariam linked the moral aspect of SMSC to their subject specifications, providing examples of how they address morality in history, geography, and psychology, respectively. David, for example, explained how they cover aspects of SMSC in history,

We are talking about slavery at the moment in year 8 history. So, talking about the slave trade from Northwest Africa across to the Caribbean, and South America. And we're talking about the ethical implications and asking students to think about whether things are fair or whether they are not. And then talking about what lessons we have learned in terms of history so that can affect our actions. (David, Teacher of Geography and RE)

The perspectives of Kate, Jenifer, David, and Mariam reveal varied interpretations of the moral aspect of SMSC within their subject areas. They appear to re-contextualize and apply the policy differently based on their subject specifications, aligning with the notion proposed by Ball et al. (2012) that policy enactment involves innovative processes of interpretation.

Pupils' social development involves using a range of social skills, participating in the local community, appreciating diverse viewpoints, resolving conflicts, and engaging with British values, while cultural development is demonstrated by understanding and appreciating different cultural influences, exploring and respecting diversity, and participating in cultural opportunities (Ofsted, 2015). Laila, Julia, Kate, Jenifer, and David expressed that they are covering the social and cultural aspects of SMSC within their subject areas.

In the realm of cultural engagement within subject areas, Laila, a Teacher of MFL, highlights the inherent presence of cultural exploration. Given the nature of language instruction, she stated that;

I would say, in my subject area, the cultural thing is very much present... we explore cultures of different countries, and we do studies of different people, different languages, and so on. (Laila, Teacher of MFL)

Julia, PE teacher, contends that PE stands out as one of the most social subjects. Drawing attention to the collaborative and competitive aspects of sports, Julia suggests that sports, along with drama, foster a strong social environment. She exemplifies this by describing an annual gymnastics and dance show she organizes, where cultural dances are showcased, eliciting widespread appreciation.

Jennifer, Teacher of History and RE, delves into the cultural considerations within her subject area. She emphasizes the need to reflect on "cultural capital" in designing modules and lessons. Jennifer underscores the intentional incorporation of British values into lesson planning, demonstrating a proactive approach. Additionally, she accentuates the social dynamics within lessons, emphasizing the

creation of a community atmosphere during form time and collaborative work, particularly among A-level students in smaller classes. Jennifer suggests that these intentional strategies contribute to the cultivation of a positive and engaging learning environment. Kate, on the other hand, gave a more detailed connection with English literature and social and cultural aspects of SMSC, as she also did with other aspects.

clearly there are some sort of cultural relevant factors there, and then a range of social skills. And now, literature is just such a beautiful one for appreciating these four areas, because I think literature offers this incredible mirror to society and it's almost like a snapshot of society at different points. That's why I really believe it's important to study literature from different areas, not just the 16th centuries, but also the 21st century. (Kate, Teacher of English)

The perspectives of these teachers again show that they have the knowledge and understanding of SMSC, but interpret and imply the same policy differently, as Ball et al. argues (2012). While Julia and Jennifer linked social aspect with teamwork activities where students can socialise, Kate connected social and cultural parts with the presentation of a snapshot of the society from different times, events, or areas. These teachers seem to re-contextualise the social aspect according to their subject areas.

It should be noted that the enactment of policies is influenced not only by the actors directly involved in the policy process, such as teachers in this instance but also by the broader social and cultural context in which the policy is implemented, as highlighted by Ball et al. (2012). Out of the eighteen teachers, seven confirmed that they teach SMSC during designated form or PSHE time, while five teachers incorporate SMSC into their school plan or ethos, particularly regarding the social and cultural aspects.

One participant, Robert, PE teacher, highlighted the intrinsic connection between SMSC and the school's ethos, emphasizing its integration into the broader values culture, particularly focusing on the social and cultural dimensions.

SMSC is connected our school ethos which is very much part of our values culture, especially the social and cultural parts (Robert, Teacher of PE) This insight from Robert underscores the alignment of SMSC with the overarching values and identity of the educational institution. Moreover, Martin (RE) specifically pointed out that a substantial portion of SMSC content is covered within the PSHE curriculum, emphasizing its significance in promoting the intended educational values.

Adam, a teacher of Psychology, provided additional context, revealing that PSHE, being a regularly scheduled lesson for every student and delivered by form tutors, serves as a platform for the explicit instruction of SMSC. This further underscores the practical integration of SMSC education into the formal curriculum structure, with PSHE acting as a conduit for its delivery.

In summary, the analysis indicates that a considerable number of teachers choose designated form or PSHE time to teach SMSC, while others embed SMSC principles within the broader framework of their school's plan or ethos. The participants' perspectives, exemplified by Robert, Martin, and Adam, illustrate the multifaceted ways in which SMSC is integrated into the educational fabric, aligning with both institutional values and formal curriculum structures.

Moreover, Laila mentioned that, in her school, they are participating local community by organising charity events, picking up litters around the school and the residential area which they named 'green walk', and they have community celebrations like Eid or Diwali, where individuals of all religions and ethnicities are invited. Julia added that social and cultural components are incorporated into their school program.

I think, particularly in my school, we celebrate diversity quite frequently. I guess there is no dominant group in terms of cultural background, and we are a little bit United Nations in that respect. So, for us, the diversity of the pupils is absolutely part of our everyday life really and so we do celebrate that in lots of different ways. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

These examples demonstrate that in addition to teachers' own perceptions and interpretations, the policies or beliefs of schools also play a role in implementing the SMSC policy. So, in this case, the internal policies of the schools, school ethos, seem to particularly important in the enactment of a policy (Ball et al., 2012). Despite being familiar with the broader policy framework, most teachers struggle to interpret policies accurately, as very few policies are implemented in their complete and final form after the process of translations and interpretations (Ball et al., 2012,). Only Kate, Jennifer, and Robert expressed teaching all aspects of SMSC within their subject areas or school programs, whereas none of the other participants reported doing so, although some were aware of the bigger picture.

Personal Social Health and Economics Education (PSHE) and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

PSHE was first introduced as part of the National Curriculum in England with the purpose of enabling students to develop confident, healthy, independent lives (DfEE and QCA, 1999). Then, a framework for sex and relationship education embedded in PSHE was published in 2000 with its aim to support

students' physical, emotional, and moral development (DfEE, 2000). In 2013, the DfE introduced statutory guidance for PSHE, which outlined the topics that should be covered in the programme of study, including relationships, sex education, drug and alcohol awareness, and financial education, physical activity, and diet for a healthy lifestyle (DfE, 2013). However, PSHE remained a non-compulsory subject in schools until 2020, when the government announced that it would become mandatory for all schools to teach relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) (DfE, 2019/2).

Although there is not a set curriculum for PSHE, schools are suggested to develop their program according to the needs of their students by considering NC, basic school curriculum, and statutory guidance on RSHE (DfE, 2021). On the other hand, the aims of RSHE were set clearly in the 2021 Guidance which also includes supporting resilience and character development of the students by including:

Character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness, and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth. There are many ways in which secondary schools should support the development of these attributes, for example by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship, and voluntary service to others locally or more widely. (DfE, 2021, p. 26)

Given that certain aspects of PSHE and RSHE are strongly tied to moral education by considering students' physical, mental, health and character development, it has been added to the stimulus material to be used for discussion.

Teachers were asked whether PSHE and RSHE education were included in their school curriculum and considered as part of moral education. They indicated that PSHE is an important subject in most schools and is incorporated into form time in some schools, while RSHE is part of PSHE or form time in nearly all schools. Of the participants, nine teachers reported having one hour of PSHE time with form tutor, five reported having a separate PSHE lesson every week, two reported having one PSHE lesson every fortnight, and two reported having a whole day allocated for PSHE once a month.

As specified in the literature, several arguments advocate for moral education as a distinct subject, separate from other disciplines within the curriculum. Wilson (1972, 1973), for example, emphasizes the autonomy of moral thinking and the need for teachers to understand its objectives thoroughly, suggesting that moral education requires its own methodology and so needs to be taught as a distinct subject area (Wilson, 1972). McPhail supports this notion by emphasizing structured moral education programs, such as the Lifeline project, which necessitate teachers to guide students in moral reasoning

and empathy (McPhail, 1972). Tillson argues for separate ethics education to address moral questions impartially, while Hand highlights the multifaceted nature of moral education, including moral reasoning and the formation of virtues (Tillson, 2011; Hand, 2017). Collectively, these scholars emphasize the unique role and importance of moral education as a standalone subject in fostering moral reasoning among students. Although there is not a separate subject of moral education or any evidence of the use of Wilson's methodology of moral education, teachers' responses show that the PSHE or form time seem like a separate place where teachers are teaching aspects of moral education.

The way in which a policy is framed or communicated can also influence how it is perceived and implemented (Bacchi, 2009). The data shows that schools are paying attention to PSHE more than any other moral education policies, and so the teachers. The compulsory status of RSHE curriculum may have an impact on this attention. However, it should be noted that the data was collected between October 2020 and February 2021, and RSHE became compulsory from September 2020. Therefore, the impact of RSHE may not be that impactful at the time data collected.

The data reveals that all teachers have some knowledge of and teach PSHE to some extent, with PSHE or form time being the primary place where they cover moral education and related policies.

As argued in the literature review, the development of some policies was affected by social context and political ideologies, such as FBVs. Similarly, the data shows that the development of the internal policies also affected by the social context and needs of the schools. Jane, for example, articulated that they are covering up to date issues within PSHE curriculum such as Black Lives Matter movement, which was popular on the data collection timeframe.

We have PSHE curriculum in our school and so we do teach those moral stuff there. We have a curriculum with values, morals, for example, we have black history month, anti-bullying, kindness, all that kind of stuff that we do in form class so that they understand they can make well informed decisions. (Jane, Teacher of Maths and Economics)

According to the policy enactment theory, policies can either be developed at higher levels or emerge within schools or local authorities or can become popular practices without any distinct origin (Ball *et al.*, 2012). Similar with Jane's expression, Sera and David stated that they are teaching Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) education within PSHE curriculum.

They've got a lot of stuff at the moment of awareness of human rights, disabilities, ethnic groups, that kind of thing, sort of BAME (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic) education is very important. 80% of the children in my school are Asian. So, they're very keen to promote that and in light of what's been going on recently in the

community. They're very keen to promote that sort of thing. (Sera, Teacher of Geography)

These examples show that, as stated in the PSHE guidance (DfE, 2021), schools are actively developing their PSHE curriculum according to the needs their students, which means they do not implement the policies as a top-down process and play a dynamic role in policy implementation process (Ball et al., 2012). In line with this, eight teachers said that they have PSHE curriculum developed for their school and ten teachers stated having a programme coordinator or module leader (SLT) responsible for the PSHE curriculum.

In part of our PSHE programme we have units covering citizenship, FBVs, PSHE, and RSHE. So, each unit has a lead teacher who will prepare resources and the material that is to be taught. Then we meet with the staff who are teaching the unit, and we disseminate that information to them; we have the resources we ensure that everything's covered. and then there's a follow up process to that. So, after the unit is completed the pupils all complete self-evaluation form for what they know and understand before afterwards. And then those evaluation forms are collected and as a member of staff whose responsibility is for that whole area of the curriculum. So, it is very organised process. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

According to the Julia and other seven teachers who made a similar statement, members of SLT are responsible for putting policy into practice and communicating them to teachers (Ball *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand, six of the participants emphasised that they have PSHE leader who prepares the plans, materials, and activities for them and they are just teaching what is provided to them, which shows that some teachers have no agency on policy enactment, and they implement the PSHE curriculum as a top-down process, aligning with the findings of Ball et al. (2012).

Jane, a teacher of Maths and Economics, exemplified this top-down approach, explaining that an Extended Learning coordinator prepares all materials and distributes them to form tutors, with teachers having a brief overview before delivering the content in their classes, typically spanning 20-25 minutes.

She sends it to all form tutors, we just have a quick look before and then we teach it in our class. (Jane, Teacher of Maths and Economics)

Mariam, a teacher of Psychology, further emphasized the role of a PSHE coordinator within her school, who reviews the government's program for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and PSHE, extracting required content, and then structures modules for delivery by tutors. This description underscores a centralized approach to curriculum planning and distribution, further supporting the

argument that some teachers operate within a framework where policies are predetermined and disseminated by higher authorities.

Additionally, Laila highlighted that they cover the PSHE curriculum during their form time in the morning, where there is insufficient time for in-depth discussions. Consequently, PSHE is treated as a tick-off process in her school, where teachers complete the tasks assigned by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). This suggests that, in her school, teachers other than the SLT have limited agency in policy enactment and are instructed on what to do.

Similar to the PSHE responses, the participants demonstrated a collective awareness of the statutory requirement for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) and confirmed its inclusion in their respective school curricula. Specifically, eleven teachers reported incorporating RSE within their PSHE program, while three teachers included it in their form time. Additionally, three teachers reported teaching RSHE in relevant subject areas, such as biology, PE, RE, ICT, and science, while one teacher noted that RSHE was embedded in everyday school life. Since RSHE is a mandatory obligation for all schools, it was anticipated that teachers possess the expertise and familiarity to teach it. However, it appears that the extent to which teachers teach RSHE is contingent upon their expertise and the emphasis placed by their respective schools on its significance.

We teach RSHE within PSHE, and the head of PSHE gives us all the resources. I have some kind of contribution towards the RSHE curriculum with mental health. So, I put in some resources about mental health for the year elevens and the key stage three as well. But all the other things that are done by the head of PSHE. So, for example, if I was to teach sex education and wouldn't know what to do, I just rely on the expert to do all the resources. (Mariam, Teacher of Psychology)

Although Mariam stated her involvement in the enactment process of the RSHE curriculum, she also acknowledged that when she lacks expertise, she follows the directives of the SLT. Therefore, it could be argued that the enactment process in her case was only partial.

Furthermore, the relationships between different actors and institutions also play a significant role in shaping policy enactment (Ball et al., 2011). Actors with different roles, responsibilities, and levels of power may have different perspectives and interpretations of a policy, which can lead to conflicts and struggles over its implementation (Maguire *et al.*, 2020). For example, teachers may interpret a policy in a different way than headteachers, leading to different implementation strategies.

Martin, serving as both Deputy Head and a teacher of RE, illustrated the complexity of implementing Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) policy, which is dispersed across multiple subjects. He

acknowledged the challenge of ensuring compliance with the new RSHE guidance, utilizing a document to map the required topics. However, Martin also recognized the inherent difficulty in precisely mapping the incorporation of RSE, given the unpredictable nature of discussions that might arise in different classrooms with different teachers. This highlights the nuanced nature of policy interpretation and implementation, especially when addressing sensitive topics. Chris, a Teacher of Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), provided a candid perspective on his discomfort with specific topics within the PSHE program, particularly those related to sex education. Despite personal reservations, Chris acknowledged the obligation to deliver the content as provided by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

However, it is part of our PSHE programme, and I have to deliver it. So, I just use slides given by SLT and do it as I have to do. But it doesn't mean I feel comfortable talking about this kind of stuff. (Chris, Teacher of MFL)

In his role as Deputy Head, Martin placed greater emphasis on the RSHE mandate and exhibited more efficient organization. He also displayed awareness of the potential implications that may arise due to variances in teachers' practices. Chris's response, on the other hand, demonstrated that certain teachers may encounter difficulties in implementing certain policies (Maguire et al., 2020). This could be because teachers, as actors, may interpret and construe policies in manners that conform to their individual values and motivations, rather than the policy's intended purpose (Ball et al., 2012).

As per the latest guidelines (DfE, 2021), RSHE encompasses the character development of students and the instruction of virtues such as humility, courage, etc. The teachers' responses on this matter will be discussed in the character education section later.

Citizenship Education

Citizenship education (CE) first introduced within 1999 NC and added to the NC in 2002 as compulsory school subject for ages 11-16, with the aim of increasing knowledge, skills and values relevant to participative democracy and active citizenship (DfE, 2002). CE is defined in three strands: social and moral responsibility, community involvement, and political literacy (QCA, 1998, pp.11-13). The curriculum has been reviewed twice, with the introduction of 'identity and diversity' following the Ajebo report (DfES, 2007), and a focus on political literacy and promoting active, responsible students in the last revision of NC (DfE, 2013). The aims of citizenship education in the NC include the promotion of mutual respect and understanding of diverse national, regional, religious, and ethnic identities, and the encouragement of active participation in community volunteering and other forms of responsible activity that could be considered as components of moral education (DfE, 2013).

When asked whether Citizenship education is included in their school curriculum and whether they consider it a part of moral education, almost all of the interviewed teachers (n: 14) responded that they incorporate Citizenship topics into form time or PSHE time, and do not have a dedicated lesson for it. Mariam (Teacher of Psychology) was the only one who reported teaching citizenship as a separate subject. The remaining teachers stated that they do not have citizenship as a subject area. Ahmad (Teacher of ICT and Computing) and Jane (Teacher of Maths and Economics) noted that Citizenship education is covered within RE. Jennifer (Teacher of History and RE) reported that she teaches most of the citizenship topics in her history classes. She elaborated on the comprehensive coverage of Citizenship-related themes in her history classes, spanning aspects such as democracy, government, and law. She provided further examples,

For example, we look at different ideologies between communism and capitalism, and understanding what democracy is and why we live in one, and why it's advantageous to live in a democracy rather than potentially a dictatorship. (Jennifer, Teacher of History and RE)

Martin, a Teacher of RE, explained the historical evolution of Citizenship education in their school, highlighting its integration into the PSHE curriculum. He emphasized that Citizenship issues, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) topics, and career development issues are all incorporated into the PSHE curriculum.

Given that these subjects often incorporate topics related to socio-political, cultural, and religious issues, it is possible that these teachers found citizenship to be relevant in the context of RE and history as aims of citizenship includes understanding of diverse national, regional, religious, and ethnic identities as well as promoting active, informed participation in democratic society. Nevertheless, none of the teachers established any correlation between Citizenship education and moral education apart from acknowledging its association with PSHE and SMSC curriculums, including FBVs, and defining moral education as involving the being good citizens. While Michael (Teacher of MFL and RE) expressed that moral education also includes 'how to be good citizens', Adam (Teacher of Psychology and PE) stated that it is about passing on the values to make students decent global citizens. Unfortunately, the data did not allow me to explore how they understand being 'good citizens' or 'decent global citizens. However, once asked about citizenship education they did not make any connection with moral education.

Citizenship, we look at what elements of citizenship are taught. So, we do teach GCSE, citizenship, A level citizenship and then for any values at key stage three level, we map against what we teach them in PSHE. So, there is cross-curricular links between citizenship, SMSC, and PSHE. (Adam, Teacher of PE, and Psychology)

According to Ball et al. (2012), some policies may be disregarded or implemented in an unfavourable manner. The teachers' experiences indicated that Citizenship education is not given significant emphasis in schools despite being a subject area mandated by legislation, and it exists like a *ghost subject* as Arabaci (2022) stated. It may be argued that Citizenship education is partially disregarded, given that its topics continue to be taught under the PSHE syllabus or integrated into the History or RE curriculum.

Fundamental British Values (FBVs)

According to SMSC guidance published in 2014 all schools are required to promote Fundamental British Values (FBVs) of "democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs" through SMSC (DfE, 2014, p. 5). Moreover, the Teachers' Standards sets the expectation of 'not undermining' FBVs in schools (DfE, 2021). Considering the expectations and definition by the DfE, it was predicted that the participants would acknowledge FBVs as part of moral education policies. Given that certain aspects of FBVs are strongly tied to the concept of moral education, particularly in the aspect of shared values, it has been added to the stimulating material to be used for discussion.

According to policy enactment theory, policies can affect teachers' understanding of a concept in several ways, including creating new professional development opportunities (Ball, 1998; Ball et al., 2012). Upon inquiring about FBVs, most teachers reported having undergone CPD when the program was initially launched, thereby possessing a thorough comprehension of the values and school requirements. Nevertheless, some teachers have acknowledged being unaware of the complete list of values and necessitated reviewing the document.

Despite having knowledge of FBVs, some teachers have emphasized their preference for teaching these values without explicitly referring them as "fundamental" or "British." This phenomenon is attributed to two reasons according to the data. Firstly, such values are not limited to British culture, rather they pertain to all cultures (Panjwani, 2016; Struthers, 2017). Secondly, the timing and rationale for releasing FBVs were deemed inappropriate. Mariam (Teacher of Psychology), for example, first said that '*nobody knew what these values were*' and after reading the list of values she expressed that there is a problem with naming those values as 'British' while teaching. Julia (Teacher of PE) said that she finds it difficult to identify Britishness, so she does not spend much time thinking about it, and so tend to gravitate towards what she believes to be right and wrong. Jenifer (Teacher of History and RE) and Kate (Teacher of English) emphasised that those values belong to all people around the world, not just British, and expressed that they are teaching those values without mentioning them as 'British'.

Also, David (Teacher of Geography and RE) stated that he is not happy calling those values 'fundamental' and 'British' as it may cause students to think that these values are superior to those of other countries.

The sentiment echoed by Mariam, a Teacher of Psychology, reflects a broader perspective among participants regarding the term "British values." She expressed the belief that the principles encompassed within these values are universal and pertain to all human beings.

It is just the fact that you call it British values, they are values of all human beings. We just felt the name and the timing of it being implemented wasn't right. (Mariam, Teacher of Psychology)

Kate (English) shared a similar viewpoint, contending that the concept of respect is not exclusive to any single culture; rather, it should be universally embraced across the globe. In her teaching, Kate conveyed that she refrains from explicitly labelling respect as a British value.

David, Geography and RE teacher, questioned the necessity of categorizing these values solely as British. While acknowledging that these values are mandated by the government, he expressed the view that they are not unique to Britain but are shared by many countries. David articulated a concern about students perceiving these values as superior to those held by other nations. Instead, he advocated for teaching them as the values upheld in the specific society they inhabit.

What I would not want students to do is to start thinking that in some way these values are superior to values those other countries have. So, we will teach them as the values that we hold in the society that we live. (David, Teacher of Geography and RE)

In essence, these teachers collectively challenge the notion of exclusively labelling certain values as "British" and question the need for such distinctions. They underscore the universality of these principles and advocate for a more inclusive approach in acknowledging and imparting these values without implying superiority over values held by other societies.

Although Mariam, Julia, Jenifer, Kate, and David did not express any division that FBVs caused as founded in some research (Elton-Chalcraft et al., 2017; Habib, 2017; Moncrieffe and Moncrieffe, 2019; Revell and Bryan, 2018; Vincent, 2019), they clearly articulated that they are teaching the values of respect, tolerance, and democracy as part of their subject areas, if relevant, or in their PSHE time. According to Ball et al., policies rarely provide clear instructions or definitions, and the process of policy enactment involves interpretations of interpretations (Ball et al., 2012). Although the list of values in the framework of FBVs is defined clearly and most teachers were aware of it due to their CPD training, their expressions show that they interpret the FBVs differently. This can show that even

if the policy gives the list of values as FBVs, the understanding and practices of teachers may differ. These five teachers seem to interpret FBVs from the perspective of shared values or community values (Healy, 2019) and implemented FBVs as human values without calling them fundamental or British.

Moreover, although not on the stimulus material, when I asked for their opinion on FBVs I noticed that teachers have been talking about cultural capital (Cooke et al., 2019) which has been part of the Ofsted inspection framework since September 2019 (DfE, 2019). The framework requires schools to design a good curriculum targeting students to receive knowledge and cultural capital in order to succeed in life (DfE, 2021). While some teachers directly comment on cultural capital, others talk about British culture, sports, history etc. Laila and Jenifer, for example, said that in their schools they take cultural capital seriously and organise their curriculum and activities to provide it. When Laila said:

We have had assemblies last year about British values, and cultural capital as well, a concept that I do not really agree with to be honest with you, but it was something the school deem to be important to pass on to children. So, cultural capital was embedded in so many events to, how to say, to enhance, to value more British Culture. (Laila, Teacher of MFL)

According to Ball et al. (2012), although policies may conflict, schools and teachers are expected to possess the knowledge and ability to implement them, and they bear the responsibility of fulfilling this obligation. Unfortunately the available data did not permit an investigation into the rationale behind her lack of support for the notion of cultural capital. Nevertheless, it is evident that her school regards the implementation of FBV-related policies as significant and she and her school seem to be fulfilling her responsibility as required. Similarly, when Jenifer stated:

Cultural capital is the principles or the values we are specifically teaching in that module. So already, our teachers in my department know that these are the British values. We are teaching this half term and we include them in our lessons. (Jenifer, Teacher of History and RE)

She articulated that cultural capital is part of their schemes of work in humanities subjects. Similar with other five teachers, Jennifer also expressed that they are not mentioning these values as British. Julia, on the other hand, talks about British sports and cultural history once asked about FBVs.

For me it would be in a very specific context, it would be in thinking about sport. we do teach them, we do teach some traditional what we would call British sports, which sort of grounded in our cultural history. But we also teach some things that like the Brazilian capoeira, completely outside of our sort of scope as well. I would consider that to be part

of British values and that's kind of where I would see myself fitting into that (Julia, Teacher of PE).

Although she did not call it cultural capital, she mentioned that they teach traditional British sports as part of FBVs, teach the notion of fair play and the Olympic value of taking part rather than winning or losing. Given the Ofsted framework's expectation, the cultural capital refers to the British values. However, cultural capital is not limited to a specific culture, but rather it is related to the cultural resources and practices that are valued in a particular social context (Bourdieu, 1986). Julia's expression of teaching values in sports show that she interprets FBVs and cultural capital in her own context. Moreover, she included teaching other cultures' sports, such as Brazilian Capoeira, within her understanding of FBVs. As Ball et al. argues, teachers have different interpretations of the policy (2012), and they understand and implement FBVs in different ways without referring it fundamental or British. Moreover, according to Ball et al. (2012), the policy enactment involves innovative processes of interpreting and recontextualizing the policies. Julia seems to recontextualise the FBVs and cultural capital according to her subject specification, sports, and feels very satisfied teaching it in this way.

It is noteworthy that the teachers who referenced Fundamental British Values predominantly teach subjects that relate to the humanities, English, or sports. Specifically, Mariam, Jennifer, Laila, and David are teachers of humanities subjects, with Mariam teaching psychology, Jennifer teaching history and RE, Laila teaching modern foreign languages, and David teaching geography and RE. Kate teaches English, and Julia teaches physical education. Given that these subjects often incorporate topics related to socio-political, cultural, and religious issues, it is possible that these teachers found FBVs to be relevant in the context of moral education policies. Notably, the teachers' comprehension of FBVs appears to differ depending on the subject area they are teaching.

Character Education

Although its roots can be traced back to the 19th century, character education has recently gained renewed attention and emphasis in British education agenda. In 2015, the DfE started a support project with a budget of £3.5 million to help schools ensure that more children develop a set of character traits, attributes, and behaviours that underpin success in education and work (DfE, 2015/2). In 2016, DfE published the White paper Educational Excellence Everywhere drawing attention to the development of world-leading curriculum that a knowledge-based, well assessed and aiming to build character and resilience in all pupils (DfE, 2016). In 2019, the framework for character education was published which defines character education as "the deliberate, proactive and holistic development of young people's character, attributes, and behaviours that are widely accepted as being positively

linked to success and well-being" (DfE, 2019/1, p. 4). The main goal of character education is to prepare students for life beyond the classroom by developing their personal and social skills, such as resilience, responsibility, respect, and integrity (DfE, 2019/1).

Schools have a statutory duty, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, to promote the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life. Character education contributes to this duty to promote SMSC. The duty applies to academies and free schools through the Independent School Standards. (DfE, 2019/1, p.4)

The framework for character education includes the development of long-term goals, positive moral attributes- known as virtues, such as courage, honesty, generosity, integrity, humility-, social confidence, and appreciation of long-term commitments, which have been found to improve educational attainment, engagement with school, and attendance (DfE, 2019/1). Moreover, since 2019, evaluating schools' character education provision has been included in the Ofsted inspection framework indicating the importance of this aspect of education, which can be incorporated into the curriculum through lesson plans, extracurricular activities, and school culture (Ofsted, 2019/5; DfE, 2019/1). Most recently, the emphasis on character development is given by the RSHE guidance published in 2021 (DfE, 2021). Given that all aspects of character education can be accepted as part of or form of moral education, it has been added to the stimulus material to be used for discussion.

When it comes to character education, nearly all teachers mentioned the values and virtues in their school ethos (n:16). Seven teachers indicated that character education is integrated into the ethos or values of their schools, and two of these teachers, Martin and Kate, mentioned that their schools have implemented specific character education programs. Five of these teachers reported that extracurricular activities, including school trips and assemblies, provide opportunities to support students' character development. It is important to note that the character education policies were released in 2019 and 2020, while the data was collected in 2020 and 2021. Moreover, it is part of Ofsted inspections and statutory RSHE curriculum. This may suggest that the reason for schools paying significant attention to character education is due to the recent introduction of policies on the subject.

Jennifer (History and RE) offered insights into the practical implementation of character education within the school. She described the utilization of form time as an opportunity to monitor students' progress, behaviour, and achievement points. In this setting, students engage in learning about character through the exploration of virtues such as honesty, loyalty, courage, and generosity. This deliberate focus on character-building aligns with the newly introduced policies.

Michael, MFL and RE teacher, acknowledged the overlap of character education with Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) and RE. He identified school assemblies as a primary platform for addressing character-related topics. This alignment with broader educational contexts reflects a concerted effort to integrate character education into various facets of the school curriculum.

Policies 'begin' at different points, and they have different trajectories and life spans, some are mandated, others strongly recommended or suggested (Wallace 1991). Some policies are formulated 'above', and others are produced in schools or by local authorities, or just simply become 'fashionable' approaches in practice with no clear beginning (Ball et al., 2012). In the case of character education, it seems that the inspection framework (Ofsted, 2019), the statutory status of RSHE (DfE, 2021), which also includes character development, and the character education guidance (DfE, 2019/1) have significant impact on the schools' internal policy development.

Robert, Adam (Psychology and PE), and David (Geography and RE) expressed that character education would be implicitly taught through curriculum subjects such as PE or RE, but it is not part of their explicit aims, while eight teachers emphasized that they explicitly teach virtues or values through their subject areas or PSHE programme.

We wouldn't teach character education as anything explicit or distinct. But we would be able to map that through the curriculum subjects such as, physical education as I've just talked about. (Adam, Teacher of Psychology and PE)

It is evident that certain teachers, such as Adam and David, incorporate the values and virtues outlined in national and internal policies as a part of their regular subject curriculum, as they are easily able to integrate them into their lesson plans. In contrast, teachers like Leena (Science) and Denis (Maths and Economics) express the need for a separate platform to teach character education, such as PSHE, form time, or assemblies. Therefore, their role in enacting these policies relates to their subject content. However, as discussed earlier, teachers who have been given the responsibility to develop these programs or are members of SLTs tend to play a more active role in the policy enactment process (Ball et al., 2021) which could be seen from Denis's words:

Currently, due to Covid-19, we don't have that regular assemblies that we used to have. But some of these moral issues and character education, what they mean, in essence, it was all part of the senior leadership team, part of the teachers in responsible positions. They were addressing the whole pupils of the year group are being year 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 in assembly hall, or in their form time. (Denis, Teacher of Maths and Economics)

On the other hand, Sera and Michael stated that they were not familiar with character education, although talking about the values and virtues of their school ethos such as honesty, integrity, and kindness. Similarly, Ahmad and Matthew noted that their schools did not have such a program, but they listed the values and virtues their schools hold dear such as resilience, respect, and caring. It is evident that the four teachers, Adam, David, Leena, and Denis, have a grasp of character education despite being unaware of the national policies, indicating the noteworthy influence of internal policies. Moreover, all participants, not just the four teachers mentioned, displayed a partial lack of knowledge regarding the requirements of the national policies. As previously mentioned, the character education guidance affirms that "character education contributes this duty to promote SMSC" (DfE, 2019/1, p.4), yet none of the participants referred to SMSC while discussing character education.

Summary

This chapter aimed to answer the research question of how teachers understand and implement moral education, both in relation to government policies and regardless of them. The study explored teachers' perceptions of moral education from both definitional and policy perspectives, with themes including teaching religious morals, developing autonomy, promoting social cohesion, and character building. The study also examines teachers' familiarity with policies related to moral education, including SMSC, PSHE, RSHE, citizenship education, FBVs, and character education, to gain insights into their perceptions and experiences. In the analysis of their responses to policies, Ball et al.'s (2012) policy enactment theory was applied.

The first section examines teachers' interpretations of moral education and their correlation with the historical progression of moral education theories. Some teachers associated moral education with teaching Christian values, while others emphasized developing autonomy and making informed judgments. Passing on the values of society and character development was also found to be an important goal of moral education. Although their understanding of moral education seems to have nuances from the theories, except for one teacher, none of the participants made a connection with their understanding of moral education and its theories. The study concludes that national policies and official guidelines have a greater influence on teachers' perception of moral education than theories of moral education.

The second section provides an overview of various government policies and frameworks related to moral development in students in England, including Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Education (SMSC), Personal Social Health and Economics Education (PSHE), Citizenship education, Fundamental British Values (FBVs), and Character education. The study analysed teachers' understanding and

implementation of these policies and found that most teachers have some knowledge of these frameworks but may lack specific details. Teachers generally cover SMSC within PSHE curriculum, form time, relevant subject areas, or as part of their school curriculum, while spiritual aspects of SMSC are often ignored or misunderstood. PSHE and RSHE are included in the curriculum to support students' physical, emotional, and moral development, and schools are encouraged to develop their own programs according to the needs of their students. Citizenship education is not given significant emphasis in schools, and its topics continue to be taught under the PSHE syllabus or integrated into other subjects. FBVs are required to be promoted in all schools, but teachers may have differing interpretations of these values. Finally, character education has gained renewed attention in the education agenda, and schools have a statutory duty to promote personal and social skills such as resilience, responsibility, respect, and integrity in students. Overall, the study revealed that the policies which garner more attention from teachers are PSHE, with RSHE integrated into its syllabus, and character education. This could be attributed to the mandatory nature of RSHE in all schools and the school ethos which predominantly emphasizes particular values and virtues that educators seek to cultivate in their students.

The researcher noted that some teachers struggled to translate the policy objectives into meaningful and relevant classroom practices, while some others faced challenges in implementing policies due to a lack of resources or support. Overall, the study highlights the complexity of policy implementation in schools and the importance of providing teachers with adequate training and support to effectively implement policies related to moral education.

Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion: Teachers' Role and Training

Introduction

This chapter attempts to answer the second research question of this thesis: What are the teachers' perceptions of their role and responsibilities in the moral education of students, and how do they consider the effectiveness of their professional development experiences related to teaching moral education?

The investigation sought to elicit teachers' viewpoints and experiences concerning their roles and responsibilities as professionals regarding moral education, independent of their subject-specific knowledge and their Form time or Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education time; and to explore their pre-service and in-service teacher education experiences considering moral, values, or character education.

According to the professional development theory, besides technical and subject knowledge, teachers have also need to have a deep understanding of educational concepts and debates surrounding aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced educational practices, engage with educational research, and possess strong ethical reasoning skills to navigate ethical decision-making challenges in the classroom (Orchard and Winch, 2015). As this chapter focuses on teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities concerning moral education as professionals, the professional development theory will be utilized as the framework of the analysis and discussion of the related data.

This chapter will examine teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities as professionals, pre-service and in-service education programmes, perceptions of how they developed their understanding, and suggestions for further professional development programmes regarding moral education.

Teachers' Understanding of Their Role and Responsibilities in Relation to Moral Education

When asked the teachers regarding their perception of their role and/or responsibility in teaching moral education, the results reveal that a majority of the participant teachers (n:11) considered their primary responsibility to be setting a good role model as a moral guide. Additionally, a considerable number of teachers responded by creating a secure environment for deliberating on moral or life issues (n:6), exhibiting objectivity while moderating discussions (n:5), and motivating and stimulating students towards making sound choices or decisions (n:4). In addition, it was found that some teachers

identified several other responsibilities as part of their role in teaching moral education. These included correcting misbehaviours or misunderstandings among students, contributing to society and the wider world, establishing clear standards for all students, and covering the Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) curriculum.

As considered in the literature review chapter, there are official requirements expected from the teachers regarding to their roles and responsibilities including Teachers' Standards (TS), ITT Core Content Framework (ITCCF), Early Career Framework (ECF), Education Inspection Framework (EIF), and School inspection Handbook (SIH). According to these documents, the main and most emphasised role of the teachers is being good role models to their students. Teachers are expected to "demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils" (DfE, 2021, p.14) and, by this way, they can "influence the attitudes, values, and behaviours of their pupils" (DfE, 2021, p.9). Moreover, research has shown that teachers play a critical role in facilitating moral development in their students. According to a study by Berkowitz and Bier (2004), teachers can serve as moral exemplars and help students develop a sense of moral identity through their actions and words in the classroom. In line with this, eleven teachers articulated that they see being good or positive role models and their main responsibility in teaching moral education. It is of significance to highlight that participants who perceive themselves as role models were referring to the broader responsibilities of teachers, rather than their form or PSHE times.

Teachers referred different reasons while talking about being good role models regarding to moral education of the students. Martin and Laila, for example, stated that whether they want or not, teachers have a power to impact the students, so it is better to be deliberate with being good role models.

I think we all have a crucial role in providing moral education. And if it is not to teach, it is really like an attitude that everybody has to adopt so that we can pass this onto the kids and the kids will copy good behaviour, copy good manners, copy good morality. (Laila, Teacher of MFL)

Leena, a science teacher, expressed that students originate from diverse backgrounds, and regrettably, not all of them have the privilege of being in an environment that fosters ethical values.

So, as a teacher, it is imperative to take the responsibility of being a role model and showing moral principles to students with our behaviours. (Leena, Teacher of Science)

Leena emphasized that in addition to teaching the subject matter, it is crucial to display ethical behaviour, serving as an example for students to follow. Through observation of their teachers'

conduct, students can acquire moral values and principles that will serve them beyond the classroom (Lickona, 1991).

Similarly, Rita, Adam, and Denis contended that students acquire moral values through their day-to-day interactions with their teachers. According to Rita, MFL teacher, teachers serve as exemplars of punctuality, communication skills, problem-solving, and accountability, and thus model appropriate behaviour for their students. Adam, teacher of psychology and RE, emphasized that teachers' language and conduct towards their students concerning issues that affect them also shape students' moral development. Denis, Maths teacher, thinks that it is essential for those who teach moral values to embody these values themselves. For instance, if he were a liar, he would be unable to teach his students not to lie. Therefore, he considers it important for educators to take responsibility for imparting moral values to their students to prepare them for responsible leadership in society.

In addition, Robert and Martin expressed their approach to moral education in their school, which prioritizes morals being caught instead of being taught. So their main goal is to live the morals and values that they want students to learn. Robert, a PE teacher, emphasized that this requires a concerted effort from the entire staff to embody the values of their school consistently in their daily actions. Martin, a teacher of RE, added that it is essential to lead by example not only with students but also with staff to maintain a cohesive and ethical school culture.

I think moral education comes down to the lived values of the school and are they caught rather than taught. I think that holds the most power and that's where we based all our work that as far as our education is concerned, it's high-quality teaching first is every lesson every day. (Robert, PE & Head teacher)

As seen from the teachers' responses, role modelling good behaviours are of importance for moral education of the students. According to Wilson (1973) and McPhail (1972), teachers play a pivotal role in moral education by serving as both role models and facilitators, guiding students through discussions and activities that promote moral reflection and growth. Hand (2017) further emphasizes that moral education should encompass not only cognitive aspects like moral reasoning but also affective and conative dimensions, nurturing virtues such as empathy, compassion, integrity, and resilience. Therefore, through intentional practices like role modelling, storytelling, and experiential learning, educators can effectively shape students' moral character and guide their actions, emphasizing the practical application of moral values alongside philosophical understanding (Hand, 2017).

However, although these teachers mentioned same goal, being good role models, the reasons behind their opinions were different. Leena, for example, expressed working in a diverse mainstream school where they have students from different backgrounds. She said that the parents of some of the students were working a lot to earn their living, so they cannot spend enough time with their children as much as teachers can. Accordingly, she believes that serving as a positive role model is an essential responsibility for teachers to fill this gap in students' lives.

From a different perspective, Denis, who teaches mathematics, contends that it is challenging to address ethical and moral issues in his classroom. Moreover, he expressed that he learned most of the good behaviours from his teachers and the elderly people around him when he was a child. Therefore, he sees modelling good behaviours essential for youngsters. Similarly, Rita, a Spanish teacher, expresses that it is difficult to incorporate moral education into her language lessons. Therefore, she thinks role modelling is a good way to contribute students' character development.

As discussed in Chapters 2 and 6, students are more likely to adopt positive character traits when they see these traits modelled by their teachers and other influential adults (Nucci & Narvaez, 2008), and character can be 'caught' easily from the teachers' behaviours (Jubilee Centre, 2021). In line with this, Robert, the Head of the school, and Martin, the Deputy Head, placed emphasis on the acquisition of values through observation, particularly through the process of role modelling within the school. They conveyed a strong belief in establishing a school ethos that promotes character building, which could potentially impact the significance placed on role modelling.

However, as stated at the beginning of this section, there are official documents that requires teachers to be positive and good role models for students by exemplifying the expected values, beliefs, and behaviours, such as Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2021). However, although teachers saw role modelling as an important aspect of moral education, none of the participants mentioned the Teachers' Standards or other official requirements like IIT Core content framework or ECF, except Michael and David. Michael, teacher of MFL and RE, highlighted a specific section in the Teachers' Standards that stresses the importance of being a role model and demonstrating appropriate behaviour to students. Similarly, David, a teacher of Geography and RE, emphasized that the Standards make it clear that teachers must deliver moral education or uphold moral standards through their conduct. Both Michael and David underscored the significance of modelling desired behaviour for students and facilitating discussions that encourage students to form their own opinions. However, they also emphasized that this is done in a manner that allows for open debate and is not intended to impose a specific perspective on students.

Similar with Michael and David, five teachers articulated that it is their responsibility to create a safe classroom environment where students can explore morals, different worldviews, and what is right and wrong, and they stated that they need to be objective in doing so as it is not the role of teachers to shape the moral views of their students. Kate, an English teacher, believes that creating a safe space for discussion, built on mutual respect and tolerance, is crucial for exploring morality. Similarly, David, a Geography and RE teacher, thinks that it is part of his role to facilitate conversations that allow students to explore different perspectives on tolerance and respect. Mariam, a Psychology teacher, also feels responsible for having moral conversations with her students, as they may not have the opportunity to have these discussions elsewhere.

Research supports the teachers' beliefs that providing a safe and respectful classroom environment is essential for promoting moral education and allowing students to explore different perspectives. By modelling ethical behaviour, creating a safe space for discussion, and promoting moral competence in education, teachers can help their students develop critical thinking skills and exhibit ethical behaviour themselves, as argued by Cefai (2008). In addition, students who feel safe and respected in their classroom are more likely to engage in moral behaviour and have better academic outcomes (Anderman, 1999). The study also found that when teachers provide a safe space for moral discussions, students feel more comfortable expressing their opinions and are more likely to develop critical thinking skills (Anderman, 1999), and so they can develop moral-reasoning skills (Lumpkin, 2008). This supports the teachers' beliefs that providing a safe and respectful classroom environment is essential for promoting moral education and allowing students to explore different perspectives.

However, when asked whether they have any obligations in terms of their professional roles and responsibilities in teaching moral education, again none of these teachers referred any governmental requirements although the Teachers' Standards required them to "establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect" and "set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities, and dispositions" (DfE, 2021, p. 10). Given that all participants received their initial teacher education in England, it is not reasonable to think that they are unaware of the requirements in the standards or frameworks regarding to teaching and school inspections. As argued in the literature review chapter, it might be because the governmental requirements do not have any emphasis on moral education and the school inspections focus more on other statutory guidance, such as SMSC, PSHE and RHSE (SIH, 2022) rather than teachers' personal and professional conducts in practice. As it can be seen at the Table 1 in Appendix 12, although the Standards document includes a section of 'personal and professional conduct' which includes aspects of moral education and teacher-

student relationships (DfE, 2021), the Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook (SIH) does not have any evaluation criteria for this section (DfE, 2022).

Moreover, as could be seen from the Chapters 4 and 6, the schools' internal policies, especially the schools' emphasis on the ethos or values, have an impact on teachers' understanding of their role and responsibilities concerning moral education. Regardless of the school type, it is clear that if schools have a strong ethos or principles focused on character building, teachers are more aware of their roles and responsibilities as role models or creators of a safe and respectful environment for moral discussions. Julia, for example, emphasised that when changed every government tries to make a difference in education and after their time ends those policies are thrown away. Hence, they are focusing more on the internal policies and plans of their school which is special for their conditions.

However, coping with frequent policy shifts can be a significant challenge for educators. Each new government and minister want to make their mark, leading to rule changes just as progress is made, creating a cycle of frustration for those in the educational sector. Despite paying lip service to these policy changes, schools excel at identifying and prioritizing what truly matters. So, sometimes it is better to follow what the school prioritises rather than looking at all policy points, in this case, it is following our school ethos and fulfilling our responsibilities regarding it. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

In addition to these two points, the education of teachers also impacts their understanding and experiences of their role and responsibilities. The findings show that teachers have lack of professional training regarding to moral education and once asked their training experiences most of them stated that they had pre- and/or in-service training or additional support about meeting the requirements of the PSHE, FBVs, and RHSE curriculums, which will be considered in the following section.

Teachers' Professional Development (CPDs & ITE programmes)

According to Orchard and Winch (2015), the present teacher training programs in England do not prioritize the theoretical and research underpinnings essential for effective teaching. They argue that exceptional teachers necessitate a conceptual framework to contemplate education, practical professional knowledge and skills, and an appreciation of the ethical aspects of their profession. Moreover, teachers must be regarded as professionals who necessitate continuous training and development to fulfil their crucial function in society (Darling-Hammond, 2000). To investigate whether the participant teachers received any professional training regarding moral education, including values and character education, their experiences of initial teacher training (ITT/ITE/PGCE) programs and continuing professional development programs (CPDs) were inquired.

Initial Teacher Education Programmes (ITE/ITT/PGCE)

As argued in the literature review chapter, the previous research show that the initial teacher education programmes are lacking to support candidate teachers' professional development regarding to moral, values, or character education (Mead, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2010; Arthur et al, 2015; Sanderse and Cooke, 2021), and to the other official requirements such as PSHE, SMSC, citizenship (Revell and Arthur, 2007; Wolstenholme and Wills, 2016). However, as stated before, most of this research were conducted with candidate teachers and in-service teachers' voices were missing. Therefore, in order to give these teachers a voice and explore their pre- and in-service training experiences the participant teachers were asked whether they have any programme or course about moral education during their initial teacher education programmes.

In response to this inquiry, nine teachers reported receiving training related to SMSC, PSHE, or FBVs, depending on the timing of their training. Five of these teachers expressed that when they have ITE or PGCE courses, Fundamental British Values (FBVs) was a hot topic, so they had some sections or discussions about it. Kate, for example said that they had discussions about how sensitive it could be for the students to teach British values.

Moreover, David, Martin, and Robert articulated that they had a module about SMSC and its integration to their subject curriculum. For example, Martin explained that SMSC and the understanding of British values were explicitly included in his training as an RE teacher. He noted that during his training, the guiding principle was "every child matter", but this slogan is no longer in use, and the ITE curriculum has since evolved. Nevertheless, SMSC remained a significant component of his RE teacher training, which encompassed all relevant aspects of the subject matter. Similarly, David, Geography teacher, reflected on his experience as a newly qualified teacher (NQT), noting that his induction included training on how to be a tutor, which involved observing and emulating the good practices of other tutors. He recalled that many schools also included discussions about how SMSC is woven throughout the curriculum, emphasizing the school's values as the primary focus.

Julia was the only teacher who talked about the presence of PSHE during her training as a teacher. Similar to Martin, she also drew attention to the changes in the policies, but she concluded that receiving such a training provided her with the necessary information while teaching PSHE as an NQT.

I do feel like I was relatively well prepared to go into school that time, my PGCE did address it because I do remember not being freaked out by it. Actually, I was less freaked out by it than some of the staff in the school. And suddenly it was on the

timetable, and I ended up teaching that and I think that's because I'd had some preparation on my PGCE for it. (Julia, Teacher of PE).

Considering the time period of the data collection, teachers' graduation from the ITE courses, and the raising emphasis on PSHE with the compulsory RHSE curriculum after September 2020, it is reasonable not to hear any courses of RHSE. However, PSHE was part of the official requirements since 2000 National Curriculum, and it was included Qualified to Teach framework in 2006. Interestingly, Julia was the only teacher having a PSHE module integrated into her subject content, and she said that at that time it was PSE (personal and social education).

However, none of these nine teachers referred any course or module about their personal and professional development, discussions regarding to moral issues or dilemmas, or moral reasoning skills. Moreover, none of them referred any module or course that provided an opportunity to build their own values (Mead, 2004) or character (Lumpkin, 2008).

Other than these teachers, only three participants, Laila, Denis, and Michael, indicated that they had an opportunity to have moral conversations during their course. However, among eighteen participants, Denis was the only one who expressed having a proper module or time focused on moral discussions. He reflected on his experience during his PGCE, remarking that he was fortunate to have highly educated professors and doctors who provided comprehensive training in various areas. Specifically, they emphasized the importance of morality in education and the responsibility that comes with teaching sensitive issues. According to Denis, educators should possess sufficient knowledge and strength to deliver instruction on subjects such as race, discrimination, equality, equal opportunity, and respect for privacy, religion, and ethnic backgrounds. Denis explains that his training included instruction on these moral issues, and he believes that the more knowledge a teacher has, the better they can deliver instruction in related areas. He continued that:

Also, feedback is very important. And also sharing the knowledge of fellow students. Because if each person would understand from different perspectives, different angles, tackling things, and when you put them all together, you solve this jigsaw puzzle. So and you see things outside the box as well. You see the bigger picture. (Denis, Maths Teacher)

According to professional development theory, teachers must possess more than just technical and subject knowledge; they must also possess a profound comprehension of educational concepts and the debates surrounding aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced educational practices, engage with educational research, and exhibit strong ethical reasoning skills to successfully navigate ethical decision-making challenges within the classroom (Orchard and Winch, 2015). Lumpkin (2008)

articulates that when teachers develop character themselves, they better exemplify the desired behaviours and help them morally justify the values and beliefs that they want to hold through developing moral reasoning skills. Furthermore, Wilson (1973) and McPhail (1972) asserted the importance of educating teachers in moral reasoning skills. Wilson (1973) particularly emphasized the necessity for teachers to acquire proficiency in the methodology of moral education, with reasoning skills occupying a central position in this educational process. However, the data reveals that the development of ethical or moral reasoning skills are absent in the teacher education programmes of the participants. Denis was the sole teacher who had the opportunity to participate in a course aimed at enhancing his personal and professional development regarding moral education. Unfortunately, the available data is restricted to the responses provided by the teachers, and so it is not feasible to determine the extent to which Denis integrated the acquired knowledge into his teaching practice. Nevertheless, he asserted that this experience was immensely advantageous in enabling him to become a “responsible person, responsible teacher, and responsible professional”.

It is notable that six teachers conveyed that they did not receive any training pertaining to moral education. Chris, in particular, underscored that moral education is not a topic needed to be discussed during PGCE courses, although he did not explain the reason behind this view.

In summary, consistent with prior research, the outcomes of this investigation suggest that the programmes for Initial Teacher Education inadequately facilitate the personal and professional development of pre-service teachers concerning moral education. However, distinct from prior research, this study examined the experiences of teachers' continuing professional development (CPDs) to determine if they received any instruction on moral education during their in-service periods, which will be addressed in the subsequent section.

Continuing Professional Development Programmes (CPDs)

Darling-Hammond (2017) argue that becoming an effective teacher is an ongoing process that requires continuous professional development. Hence, it needs to be part of the teacher education programmes during pre-service and in-service periods of the teachers. Additionally, McPhail (1973) contends that moral education programs should be tailored to meet the specific needs of students. Consequently, teachers need to undergo continuous professional development (CPD) programs aimed at equipping them with the skills to design and develop moral education programs tailored to the unique needs of their students (McPhail, 1973). Teachers were asked whether they had any in-service training or CPDs related to moral education. Similar to the ITE findings, some teachers referred to

policy related CPDs, such as FBVs (n:3) and PSHE (n:6), and nine teachers stated they did not receive any training about moral education.

Ten teachers articulated that they have somebody, or a group of teachers, responsible to organise the programme of PSHE sessions or form time and they are providing the plans and materials for the teachers who are teaching PSHE modules. Six of these teachers stated that they have some CPDs regarding to this, and they are spending some time talking about these plans, materials, and delivery methods during this CPDs. For example, Sera, Geography teacher, reported that at their school, sessions are provided for PSHE teachers to ensure appropriate delivery of the curriculum. Similarly, Jennifer, History and RE teacher, said that they have had a few CPD sessions on British values to ensure they are included in the curriculum, but not specifically on moral education. Rita's explanation summarises all the policy based CPDs:

We have some professional development dates about these, and we have some maybe briefings like 20 minutes explanation on some of these moral education sessions. We discuss about different topics like British values, sexual education. We discuss how to deliver it, where are the files, where are the information. Because sometimes, as a teacher, we have so many things to do, and this is one more that we need to look after it and we need to try our best to deliver it efficiently. (Rita, Teacher of MFL)

Julia and Jennifer expounded that the school schedules a CPD session for teachers every time a new obligation or guidance is released, in order to inform them about the newly established requirements. In support of this, Matthew and Jane expressed having CPD sessions on wellbeing and mental health, respectively, in order to support students about the COVID-19 epidemic.

Furthermore, Denis, Maths teacher, mentioned that, as head of year he had participated in several conferences that focused on topics such as PSHE and citizenship. Following these conferences, he would provide feedback to his team during staff meetings or assemblies. He also highlighted that the education system in the United Kingdom has undergone substantial changes over the past four decades, and it was crucial to stay up to date with these changes.

Revell and Arthur (2007) argue that teacher education programmes are lacking to support teachers personal and professional development regarding to moral education, and so the role of teachers are reduced to "mere technicians", who are told what to do without questioning (Winch, 2013). According to Revell and Arthur (2007), if teachers do not receive any education in moral, character, or values education, they will not be equipped to teach these topics.

The findings of the present study show that similar with the ITE programmes, CPD programmes are also lacking to support the teachers concerning moral education. However, as teachers articulated, some of the ITE and CPD programmes are providing support for teachers to meet the requirements of moral education policies including SMSC, PSHE, and FBVs. As discussed in Chapter 4, most schools have a specific PSHE time where teachers are trying to meet the requirements of moral education policies. However, it appears that some teachers are restricted to the role of technicians who merely convey the content supplied to them by their PSHE or form coordinators. Six teachers conveyed a lack of assurance in instructing moral education, while three teachers asserted that they adopt a neutral stance, particularly when addressing subjects like sex education. All nine teachers attributed their approach to the shortage of training and time constraints, which impedes their ability to impart knowledge beyond the provided curriculum, as argued by Orchard and Winch (2015). Furthermore, Martin expressed that teachers prioritize their subject areas and devote their time and energy to them since they are evaluated based on their students' exam results at the end.

For most teachers, their subject work is more important to them than their form work. Because actually, at the end of the day, that's where they're getting their lesson observations is their exam results that they're being judged on. And so actually getting them to focus on it, it's quite hard and having a sufficient training time for that. (Martin, RE Teacher and Deputy Head)

However, although these findings show that the ITE and CPD programmes are not sufficient enough to support teachers' personal and professional development regarding moral education and some teachers are only delivering the PSHE curriculum and materials like technicians, it is important to consider that moral education is not limited to the PSHE curriculum or other national policies. As seen from the Chapter 4 and 6, teachers can find many opportunities to cultivate desired values and behaviours through their subject areas and other extracurricular activities. Furthermore, the personal and professional development of the teachers may not be limited to the ITE and CPD programmes. Consequently, the teachers were queried regarding their perceptions on how they have acquired their understanding of moral education.

Teachers' Development of Understanding of Moral Education

Upon inquiry into the methods through which teachers believe they have improved their comprehension of moral education, the majority (n:10) cited experiential and practical knowledge as key contributors to their understanding. Three teachers mentioned their faith and personal beliefs and two other stated the impact of their PGCE courses on their understanding of moral education. The Teachers Standards (n:1), schools' ethos and community values (n:2), the principal of lifelong learning

(n:1), the virtues project (n:1), and the changing education system and understanding of moral education (n:1) were among other reasons the teachers referred.

Ten teachers said that their experience over the years in teaching helped shaping their understanding of the aims of education in general and moral education in specific. Jennifer and Jane's explanations were like a summary of all ten teacher's responses.

Jennifer, a teacher of History and Religious Education, has observed that her understanding of moral education has significantly increased by interacting with children and comprehending their thought processes and expressions. Conversations with students have enabled her to grasp their perspectives on what constitutes right and wrong.

Similarly, Jane, a teacher of Mathematics and Economics, noted that her initial teaching experiences involved primarily observing lessons rather than instructing them individually. However, through practice, she has developed skills such as lesson planning, attentive listening, precise language selection, sensitivity to certain subjects, and the ability to address students' inquiries effectively. As a result, subsequent teaching endeavours have become progressively easier, and she believes that experience is the primary factor in developing an understanding of moral education. When Michael said:

Students sort of look up to me and look to see what I do in certain circumstances, and it is really what has taught me what I know. (Michael, Teacher of MFL and RE)

He said that that these teacher-student interactions have served as a primary source of learning for him. As Michael Gove raised, teachers are articulating the apprenticeship of teaching as part of their professional development (Gove, 2010). However, sole experience may not be sufficient for an affective teaching, as argued in some studies (Orchard and Winch, 2015; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999; Shulman, 1987). It was found that none of these teachers referred that experiencing is the only or best way to develop their perception of moral education, but most of them (n:8) stated that practicing how to talk about moral issues and building relationships with students are the key factors.

It is argued that good teachers should possess both practical experience and theoretical knowledge (Biesta, 2012) and strong interpersonal skills (Berk, 2013). In addition Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) and Shulman (1987) argue that effective teaching requires a deep understanding of the subject matter, pedagogy, and knowledge of learners. In the case of moral education, the knowledge of the theories, the pedagogy to teach moral education, the needs of learners, and the practical experience of teachers are of importance for an effective teaching. The participants' responses indicate that they

are aware of the impact of practical experience and the importance of communication skills in teaching moral education. Moreover, considering McPhail's (1973) arguments that moral education programs need to be developed according to the needs of the students, it becomes evident that some teachers are already incorporating this principle into their practices. These educators are keenly attuned to the unique requirements of their students and schools, thus strategically planning and implementing moral education programs that are tailored to address these specific needs. By aligning their instructional strategies with the diverse backgrounds, abilities, and interests of their students, these teachers demonstrate a proactive approach towards fostering moral development within their educational contexts. Kate, for instance, said that:

So if the school tailored their provision dependent on the cohorts and pupils they have got. So it is almost like assessing what are the needs that we have within our population, what we, as staff, need to be aware of. Because my experience in this school is very different to my experience at my previous school. (Kate, English Teacher)

As previously discussed in Chapter 4, teachers have been found to lack knowledge regarding the theories of moral, values, or character education. While some teachers receive materials from a coordinator or develop their own, they often express a need for further training in methods, materials, and model lessons specifically focused on teaching moral education, which will be further examined in the subsequent section.

Teacher's Professional Development Needs for Moral Education

At the final stage of the interview process, teachers were inquired about which types of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs would prove beneficial in enhancing their personal and professional skills related to moral education.

Once asked whether they need any further CPDs concerning moral education, Laila and Julia were the only participants who stated they do not require any additional training, albeit for different reasons. Laila, MFL teacher, asserted that she teaches certain elements of SMSC education within her subject area and PSHE education during form time. Laila stated that she had received adequate training for her subject matter and has access to materials and programs for PSHE time. As Laila is not involved in preparing any materials or designing any programs, she believes that she does not require additional training concerning moral education. On the other hand, Julia expressed uncertainty about the benefit of further training in moral education. She stated that opinions change over time and that there is a danger in rolling out training as a one-size-fits-all solution. While she personally does not feel that she would benefit from training, she acknowledged that it may be helpful for younger and less experienced

teachers. Overall, she concluded that it is always good to reflect on one's teaching practices and consider whether they are doing the right thing.

I think it is always nice to stop and think about what you are doing and whether or not you are doing the right thing. I think I wouldn't probably know whether it is beneficial or not until I've actually had some training. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

Sixteen other teachers expressed their willingness to undergo additional training in both Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs. In terms of ITE, eight teachers emphasised that as NQTs they need to learn about what is expected from the teachers considering moral development of the students, including the professional and official expectations. Furthermore, a number of teachers made specific suggestions regarding the content of additional training programmes for moral education. This included receiving training on the fundamental principles of moral education (n:2), enhancing professional skills such as public speaking and facilitating objective moral discussions (n:2), teaching sensitive topics like sex education (n:2), and being updated on relevant policies (n:1). Ahmad, for example, listed a bunch of questions to be answered:

I think that during PGCE, they should cover these topics in more detail: why they are important to teach, how to teach them, and what the requirements are for teachers. It is important to include this in the training because many people are unsure if it is their responsibility or not, and some might have conflicting beliefs. The legal aspect of it should also be taught in school. (Ahmad, Teacher of ICT-Computing).

Similarly, Michael, teacher of MFL and RE, an initial teacher training course should introduce the concept of moral education in a broad sense, outlining the topics and values that are important to teach. This would help new teachers to understand the expectations of the school, as it is not always clear what is required of them. Rather than focusing on any specific area, a big picture overview of moral education would be more beneficial.

Accordingly, Adam (psychology and PE) and Leena (science) believe that teaching moral education should be approached similarly to teaching any other subject such as Maths or English. This involves having a clear understanding of the curriculum aims, the knowledge, skills, and understanding that the teacher wants to impart to the students, as well as practical ways of teaching and supporting materials. Leena further recommended providing more training, resources, and problem-solving scenarios for teachers to better understand how to deal with these issues, especially for younger and less experienced teachers who may not know how to handle them. She concluded that schools, driven

by a focus on exam-related tasks and heavy workloads, frequently prioritize exam preparation over active participation in activities addressing broader issues.

Additionally, Jennifer expressed her view that any educational program that enhances the understanding of moral education, its application and its challenges would be beneficial, regardless of its format. She believes that additional training on this topic at PGCE level would have been advantageous for her.

Considering the perspectives of these educators, it is evident that they recognize the insufficiency of their training and proposed additional topics for inclusion in initial teacher education programs, encompassing the enhancement of their professional development skills and compliance with governmental expectations. However, it should be noted that their suggestions were not limited to ITE courses, but also included continuing professional development (CPD) programs. Six teachers articulated that they need further training about more practical stuff like methods, materials, or sample lessons. Jane, for example, said:

As long as they give me anything that helps, like new materials, model lessons on how to teach, or explanations on difficulties that might arise when teaching a certain topic, that would be great. We also need guidance on how to approach these issues and engage students, like providing sample questions. It would be helpful to have a list of these questions. (Jane, Teacher of Maths and Economics)

Similar to Jane, Jennifer, a history and RE teacher, suggested that an example lesson on how to instil morals in students further, along with an outline of good moral practice, would be helpful. She also suggested providing suggestions on how to tackle moral education, such as challenging students, as an example.

Leena, Sera, Martin, and Adam expressed that workshops, personal modelling conversations, and materials are needed for effective moral education. They emphasized the importance of regular and differentiated workshops, as well as ongoing discussions with educators to support the delivery of messages in a thoughtful and effective manner.

Additionally, Michael, Martin, and Rita pointed out that some educators feel uneasy teaching sensitive topics such as sex education, and therefore require additional training on how to deliver such topics professionally.

So I probably benefit from more sexual education talk. So how can I deliver better in this aspect, especially for so many different cultures, so many different religions, and terminology? (Rita, MFL Teacher)

Rita concluded that the issue lies in the frequent updates and changes in the field, which require regular updates or a professional development program that includes updated versions of sexual education and terminology for different situations. She acknowledged that this was not possible before, but with the advent of social networks and other technologies, it can now be achieved. Michael and Denis also recommended additional CPDs to cover new approaches or updates to official expectations and terminology, similar to Rita's suggestion.

In addition, a number of teachers recommended further training on incorporating moral education into specific subject areas (n:2), addressing the needs of both students and schools (n:2), facilitating communication and experience-sharing among colleagues from different schools (n:3), and improving their effectiveness as educators (n:2).

Darling-Hammond (2017) argue that becoming an effective teacher is an ongoing process that requires continuous professional development. Hence, it needs to be part of the teacher education programmes during pre-service and in-service periods of the teachers. The findings of the present study indicate that teachers' suggestions for further ITE and CPD courses are in line with this idea that teachers need continuous professional development. Because, although most teachers did not receive any initial training in any aspect of moral education, some of them stated that the CPDs they receive during their in-service times helped to fill this gap, even the CPDs were about official requirements.

As proposed by Noddings (2017), teachers need to incorporate moral education in every aspect of teacher education, including coursework and field experiences. The recommendations provided by the participants concerning ITE and CPD courses indicate that most teachers are cognizant of the roles, duties, and competencies required to be professional teachers. Nevertheless, their responses reveal that due to inadequate training, they encounter difficulties in demonstrating professional agency in relation to moral education.

As previously asserted, the theory of professional development posits that teachers should possess ethical awareness and sensitivity, engage in reflective practice and moral dialogue, and enhance their ethical reasoning skills to handle the intricate moral dilemmas that arise during teaching. Therefore, it is crucial to provide teachers with education on ethical theories and principles and create a forum for discussing and deliberating their implications within the classroom setting (Orchard and Winch, 2015).

Moreover, the necessity for teacher training in moral/ethical reasoning skills is paramount, as highlighted by scholars such as Wilson, McPhail, Tillson, and Hand. Wilson emphasizes the distinct domain of moral education requiring teachers to grasp its objectives thoroughly (Wilson, 1972).

Similarly, McPhail advocates for structured moral education programs, like the Lifeline project, which demands trained teachers to foster moral reasoning and empathy in students (McPhail, 1972). Furthermore, Tillson argues that ethics education necessitates specialized training for teachers to address moral questions impartially (Tillson, 2011). Hand underscores the multifaceted nature of moral education, including moral reasoning and the formation of virtues, requiring skilled educators (Hand, 2017). However, while most teachers expressed a need for further training on navigating complex or sensitive issues and engaging in reflective practices, such as meeting with colleagues to exchange ideas and experiences, none of them mentioned their past or future development or requirements in terms of moral theories, principles, or their moral reasoning skills. Hence, it might be said that the teachers lack an understanding of the influence of their individual moral growth on imparting moral education. To increase the consciousness of ethical discourse among teachers, the administrators of both ITE and CPD courses should incorporate the personal and professional components of teaching moral education into their curriculum, besides practical aspects. However, as Orchard and Winch (2015) point out, the aspect of ethical reflection might not be prioritized by institutions or teachers due to the constraints and competing priorities. As Leena said:

Because the schools are very tired. The schools based on exam questions, and they try to do all these workloads. Unfortunately, schools often prioritize exam preparation over participation in such activities. (Leena, Teacher of Science)

Nevertheless, according to Orchard and Winch (2015), the most crucial ethical principle that should guide a teacher's professional work is to strive for the best outcomes for all students. Therefore, teachers must receive the necessary training and support to achieve this goal.

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher attempted to answer the second research question about teachers' perceptions of their role and responsibilities in moral education and the effectiveness of their professional development experiences. The study focused on eliciting teachers' experiences regarding their roles as professionals in moral education and utilized the professional development theory as a framework for analysis. The researchers examined teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities as professionals, pre- and in-service education experiences, and suggestions for further professional development programmes regarding moral education.

The first section examined teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities in moral education. The results showed that teachers considered their primary responsibility to be setting a good role model as a moral guide, creating a secure environment for deliberating on moral or life

issues, exhibiting objectivity while moderating discussions, and motivating students towards making sound choices or decisions. According to official requirements, teachers are expected to demonstrate positive attitudes, values, and behaviour consistently, which can influence their students' attitudes, values, and behaviours. However, although mentioning the same points with the official documents, except two, none of the participants referred to those documents. Nevertheless, teachers are aware of their responsibility of embodying these values themselves to make students acquire moral values through their day-to-day interactions with them.

The second section discusses the professional development of teachers in England, particularly focusing on whether teachers received any training in moral education during their initial teacher education programs (ITE/ITT/PGCE) and continuing professional development programs (CPDs). It was argued that teacher training programs in England need to prioritize the theoretical and research underpinnings essential for effective teaching, as effective teachers require a conceptual framework to contemplate education, practical professional knowledge and skills, and an appreciation of the ethical aspects of their profession. The study found that the teacher education programmes lack support in these aspects with only nine teachers reporting receiving training related to SMSC, PSHE, or FBVs, depending on the timing of their training. None of the teachers referred to any module or course that provided an opportunity to build their own values or character or to have moral conversations except one teacher having a proper time focused on moral discussions during his PGCE.

In the following section, teachers were asked how they have developed their understanding of moral education. The majority of teachers cited experiential and practical knowledge as key contributors, with some also mentioning their personal beliefs, PGCE courses, Teachers' Standards, schools' ethos and community values, and the virtues project. Teachers agreed that practical experience and building relationships with students are crucial, but theoretical knowledge is also necessary for effective teaching. They highlighted the importance of communication skills and considering the needs of students and schools when planning moral education programmes. Teachers expressed a need for further training in methods, materials, and model lessons specifically focused on teaching moral education.

At the final stage, teachers were asked about their need for further training in moral education. Although two teachers stated that they did not require additional training, sixteen teachers expressed their willingness to undergo additional training, with suggestions for content that included fundamental principles of moral education, enhancing professional skills, teaching sensitive topics, and being updated on relevant policies. The suggestions made by the teachers emphasize the need for workshops, ongoing discussions with educators, personal modelling conversations, and

differentiated training that aligns with the curriculum aims, knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers want to impart to their students. The present study reveals that teachers recognize the need for initial and ongoing professional development and incorporate moral education into every aspect of their teacher education to ensure that they remain up to date with the expectations regarding their roles and responsibilities as well as current policies and practices in moral education. The study found that the teachers did not discuss their past or future development needs regarding moral theories, principles, or moral reasoning skills. This suggests that teachers may not fully appreciate the impact of their personal moral growth on moral education. To promote ethical discourse among teachers, it is recommended that both ITE and CPD course administrators integrate personal and professional components of teaching moral education into their curriculum, in addition to practical aspects.

Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion: The Role of Subject Areas

Introduction

This chapter attempts to answer the third research question of this thesis: What potential contributions could different subject areas make to the students' moral development?

This aim of this chapter is to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education with regards to their subject areas as well as other subjects, through the employment of four-dimensional taxonomy of character education as the theoretical framework.

The historical overview highlights the existence of numerous philosophical theories of moral education. Nonetheless, these theories may pose a challenge when put into practice, as evidenced by the teachers' understanding presented in Chapter 4. Despite its philosophical background, character education emerges as the most organized and comprehensive approach to moral education, as argued by Lickona (1991). Especially the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education may provide a useful framework for integrating character education into various subject areas, as it aims to cultivate moral, intellectual, performance, and civic virtues.

Moreover, As described in Chapter 4, many teachers are familiar with character education as it has been incorporated into school ethos or Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curricula in most schools after the introduction of the Character Education Framework (DfE, 2019) and the mandatory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) framework (DfE, 2021). Therefore, this study will utilize the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education as a theoretical framework for analysing the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding the potential contributions of various subject areas to students' moral education. Given the pioneering role of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues in character education within the United Kingdom, I will utilize their taxonomy (see Appendix 11) as an exemplar while exploring various facets of the four-dimensional taxonomy within subject areas.

Building Blocks of Character

The four-dimensional taxonomy of character education emphasizes the importance of integrating character education into different subject areas to promote the development of moral, intellectual, performance, and civic virtues and I will use each dimension as the themes of this section.

Moral virtues

Moral virtues are habits or dispositions to act in ways that promote the common good and contribute to human flourishing (Nucci & Narvaez, 2008). These virtues include qualities such as honesty, compassion, courage, and fairness, which are essential for individuals to act ethically and responsibly in different contexts (Jubilee Centre, 2017).

Humanities subjects such as RE, history, literature, and philosophy have been recognized as significant avenues for promoting character education based on the Jubilee Centre's four-dimensional taxonomy (Jubilee Centre, 2017). These subjects offer unique opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking, reflection, and dialogue about moral and ethical issues (Fadel, 2015). In line with this, the six of the participant teachers referred humanities subjects as the main place for cultivation of moral virtues.

Chris highlighted the relevance of humanities subjects like sociology, religious studies, and psychology, emphasizing their inherent capacity to delve into moral topics. Sera, with a background in geography, acknowledged the contextual emergence of moral discussions, particularly in areas like human development and human rights. Similarly, Kate underscored the natural alignment of literature, history, philosophy, ethics, sociology, and even geography with the moral education landscape.

I think, literature more than any other subject, naturally. But I'm sure like history, philosophy, and ethics as well and sociology, even geography, all the humanities subjects play an important role on teaching morals. (Kate, English)

The rationale behind the prioritization of humanities as the primary domain by these six teachers lies in the appropriateness of the content in addressing moral concerns. Notably, it is worth emphasizing that teachers did not merely refer to humanities in broad terms, but singled out specific subjects, with Religious Education (RE) being the most prominent among them, cited by thirteen instructors as the appropriate area for imparting morality.

I think that just each subject area will have things that naturally get to deal with because of the subject nature. So, for example, when it comes to morality would be better within RE. (Julia, PE)

In terms of moral virtues, a study by Oplatka and Arar (2017) found that religious education can help students develop moral values and ethical decision-making skills. When asked, Julia stated that morality is about 'understanding what and why to believe something, reasoning and justifying their understanding', so she found RE as the main area for teaching morality. Similarly, Robert said:

If we are talking about RE and maybe talking about things like, they might discuss kind of abortion, for example, and in a Catholic school, obviously that would be kind of a contentious theme. There'd be kind of debate around that, but, central to that would be about students making a moralistic judgment at the end of the day. (Robert, Teacher of PE)

He emphasised the virtues of humility, loving kindness, selflessness, respect for ones beliefs and religion as part of his understanding of morality. Moreover, it is found that (Krettenauer et al., 2017; Biesta et al., 2009) subjects such as ethics and religious studies can provide opportunities for students to explore and reflect on ethical issues.

And of course, RE because that is what it is all about really. There is a lot of stuff about what is right and wrong, and ethics and things like that. (Michael, MFL & RE)

RE, furthermore, has been identified as a key subject for character education, as it provides students with opportunities to explore and reflect on their own values and beliefs, as well as those of others, in a safe and supportive environment (Berkowitz, 2012).

I think RE is the best place for it to be done. I mean to help pupils to acquire certain beliefs and values, for them to understand difference between right and wrong, and to learn how to make well informed judgements. (Jane, Teacher of Maths and Economics)

She continued that RE is the place where students easily find an opportunity to talk about values and beliefs regarding to different religions, therefore it supports moral development of the students.

Another study by Lovat and colleagues (2017) explored the role of RE in promoting character virtues such as empathy, compassion, and forgiveness, that found that it can provide a unique context for promoting these virtues by fostering a sense of community, promoting ethical values, and encouraging students to reflect on their own beliefs and values. Martin emphasised that RE is a great place where they talk about different religions and cultures regardless of the students' religions in his classroom, as argued by Berkowitz (2012), and stated that:

I love having a complete mix of religions with represented within the student body. So that's talking about cultural understanding and understanding religious practice and understanding different worldviews, which is an important part of RE. But from that conversation comes all those moral conversations. So, for example, in our GCSE RE, we do Christianity and Islam as one paper, then the other paper is thematic, and we're looking at crime and punishment, peace and conflict. And we look at different religious perspectives on that and we look at the core religion and life. So, things like abortion and euthanasia, and all of those kinds of kind of topics. So, it's absolutely loaded with

moral conversations, and you are morally educating and challenging them. (Martin, Teacher of RE)

Overall, teachers identified RE as the primary area for teaching moral values due to its suitability for discussing ethical issues and fostering moral development. RE was found to provide opportunities for students to explore and reflect on their own beliefs and values, as well as those of others, and to promote character virtues such as empathy, compassion, and forgiveness. Teachers emphasized the importance of discussing different religions, cultures, and worldviews in RE to support moral education and challenged students to make well-informed moral judgments. Besides RE, teachers also mentioned other humanities subjects as a suitable place for teaching moral virtues, such as history, geography, philosophy, and literature.

Geography, for example, has the potential to contribute to moral and character education by providing opportunities for students to engage with issues related to social justice, environmental sustainability, and global citizenship. It fosters empathy, compassion, and a sense of responsibility towards others and the environment. Furthermore, geography education allows for the exploration of diverse cultural and ethical perspectives on contemporary issues. (Catling, 2016; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Barron, 2013). Four participants found geography as an important place for teaching moral virtues and discussing moral issues.

Martin, with a background in Religious Education (RE), emphasized the moral dimension inherent in geography education, particularly in discussions regarding our ethical responsibilities towards the planet.

So, when you are teaching geography, you are talking about how we morally looking after the planet and what our obligations are to the planet. (Martin, RE)

David, who teaches both geography and RE, highlighted the role of geography in fostering discussions on fairness and morality. Through the lens of geography, he encourages students to critically examine societal disparities, drawing attention to issues like income inequality. By prompting students to evaluate the fairness and morality of such discrepancies, David aims to instill a sense of ethical reasoning and perspective-taking.

When talking about differences, we often ask the question, is that fair? ... So, it's asking about this idea of something fair, and is it moral? A footballer in the UK for example gets paid a million pounds a week, whereas we're paying a nurse in the UK 22,000 pounds a year, we tried to draw out those differences and our students to make up their own minds about what they see, as fair and what is fairly good to them. They can

come up with arguments on both sides for most of the time. (David, Teacher of Geography and RE)

Research suggests that history education can be effective in promoting critical thinking, empathy, and moral reasoning skills in students. It achieves this by examining historical events and considering the perspectives of those involved, as well as through the study of historical controversies and the examination of multiple perspectives. Additionally, history education can contribute to character education by promoting moral values such as civic responsibility, courage, and empathy (Morgan & Stanton, 2011; Journell, 2015; Saxe, 2013), and six teachers stated that history is a good place for talking about and teaching moral virtues and values.

There really are whole point of history being to create questions that make students think about both sides of the argument and debate it and that's where the morality comes into things as well. (Jennifer, History and RE)

She continued with listing the contribution of history including 'respecting others and the community around them', 'having virtues like integrity, honesty, loyalty', and 'being a good citizen', as stated by Saxe (2013).

When you look at history, you have got huge moral questions, like things about the Second World War, for example, looking at why that happened. There are huge morality questions in that. And I think in the past maybe a history teacher would see it as part of their job to just teach the events. But I think now, there is the way the context is that does lead to morality question, I think we are better at appreciating that than we used to be. (Julia, PE)

Furthermore, the study of history can offer students an insight into the development of various values and virtues over time (Power & Higgins, 2015). While Julia's discussion pertained to the changing approach to history education, it can still be viewed as a significant contribution to the moral dimension of history teaching due to its critical nature. Power and Higgins (2015) also stated that besides history, literature can also support the moral aspect by helping students explore the complexities of human nature and the consequences of moral choices. Six teachers expressed that English literature is an effective avenue for moral education as it enables students to examine ethical themes through various literary genres such as novels, poetry, and plays. The teachers noted that moral discussions frequently arise during class discussions of literary characters and their actions.

English as well. You study a novel, and the morality comes straight out of that, doesn't it? (Martin RE)

I think, some of the most emotional reactions I have had and some of the morals that I formed have been from reading books or reading poems, and certainly by looking at

the way in which others right. So, I think English is a fantastic medium to deliver that.
(David, Geography & RE)

Teachers found that literature education can promote moral virtues by encouraging students to explore different perspectives and develop a deeper understanding of human experience. Especially Kate, Teacher of English, articulated that literature education can provide opportunities for students to engage in moral reflection and develop a sense of empathy and perspective-taking, as found by Jang et al. (2016)

So, in my classrooms, I always create space for discussion. I think literature in particular is a really good space to do that. So, you can explore justice in the sense of what's right or wrong. Through a novel through a play. What do we think of this character, what might have happened if this had happened, and why do you think this character did this? And again, I'm not trying to tell them what to do, but I'm sort of creating a space where we can explore. I think Literature is a really cool mirror for understanding. In the end, everybody has their own decisions. (Kate, English)

Finally, Adam and Mariam, who teach psychology, stated that, besides other humanities areas, their subject area also support cultivation of morality.

There is always a way of linking what you are teaching to what is happening outside, and what is right and wrong and how they need to be acting in certain situations, and my curriculum has a lot to do with morality. (Mariam, Psychology)

It is seen that humanities subjects, such as RE, history, literature, and philosophy, can play a significant role in promoting character education and moral development in students. Teachers believe that these subjects offer unique opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking, reflection, and dialogue about moral and ethical issues, and are appropriate for addressing moral concerns. RE was found to be the most prominent area for imparting morality, as it provides students with opportunities to explore and reflect on their own values and beliefs, as well as those of others, in a safe and supportive environment. Moreover, RE can help students develop moral values and ethical decision-making skills, and that it can provide a unique context for promoting character virtues such as respect, empathy, compassion, and forgiveness. Besides RE, geography, history, literature, and psychology can each promote a range of virtues and play an important role in promoting character education based on the moral virtues in the four-dimensional taxonomy.

Notwithstanding the undeniable role of humanities subjects, it is worth noting that there exist other subjects capable of addressing moral issues. This was emphasized by Leena, a science teacher, who underscored the significant role her subject area plays in cultivating morality.

We've got lots of points in science, between belief and disbelief, like all these ideas of abortion, contraceptives, donating organs, or giving blood, blood transfusions, and stuff like that. We come across lots of topics where lots of moral arguments and different backgrounds refuse to agree. And you have to form a good platform for discussion, without arguing as persons on a different level just like is acceptable in the school environment. You've got to make them understand that you have to respect others' views, and we have to get them to say 'you can argue this scientific fact, but you cannot argue, the class between each other' because the facts are facts and it is different than hating or loving one of your other students. (Leena, Teacher of Science)

She asserted that science presents numerous prospects for moral discourse, as well as offering practical means of fostering respect through such conversations. Moreover, the subjects of drama (n:4) and arts (n:3) were brought up, in which students are afforded the chance to delve into, act out, and evaluate morals through their role-playing experiences.

They're also well-exploited drama you know where pupils will get to act out some of these things, maybe the big moral questions. I know, at the moment they are performing Blood Brothers, and that's a really good example of a play with a moral message. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

Based on the responses of the teachers, it is evident that moral virtues can be nurtured in a majority of subject areas, albeit to varying degrees. However, it is worth noting that the role of humanities subjects, particularly Religious Education (RE), appears to be more prominent than that of other areas. It's worth noting that in addition to its curriculum, RE also carries a historical responsibility. As discussed in the literature review, RE has had a close association with moral education since the inception of schooling in Britain. Initially, its primary objective was to impart Christian morals, but it subsequently evolved into a platform for exploring the morals and values of various religions. Presently, RE is viewed as a domain where students can make moral justifications for their beliefs and values, and acquire virtues such as respect, in addition to investigating the morals and beliefs of world religions.

Civic virtues

As well as the individual flourishing, Jubilee Centre put the societal flourishing as the main goal for character education. Civic virtues help students to “understand their ties to society and their responsibilities within it” (Jubilee Centre, 2022, p. 8) and so promote social responsibility, civic engagement, and the achievement of the common good (Staub & Vollhardt, 2008; Moseley, 2012). These civic virtues include respect for others, responsibility, compassion, honesty, and integrity (Stout, 2013; Lovat et al., 2017), and “civility, service, citizenship, and volunteering” (Jubilee Centre, 2022, p.

8), that are essential for responsible citizenship and contributing positively to society (Stout, 2013; Lovat et al., 2017).

Seven teachers stated that teaching how to be a good citizen is part of moral development of the students. Denis stated that:

Delivering the moral values, social values, and the cultural values diversity, and being a good and responsible citizen, abiding by the rules and law... All of these are in our responsibility regardless of our expertise. But I think social sciences are more inclined into. (Denis, Teacher of Maths)

He did not refer to Maths while teaching these in their practice but emphasised that it's their duty to support community cohesion. Michael, teacher of MFL and RE, from another point, stated that in MFL they focus on cultures and community issues such as equality, immigration, and racism, and values of the community. Kate, on the other hand, referred her subject area, English, when asked about contributing the society.

I think literature offers this incredible mirror to society, and it's almost like a snapshot of society at different points. That's why I really believe it's important to study literature from different areas, not just the 16th centuries, but also the 21st century. And what are the differences? And what do they reveal about? And so almost in so doing, you create a space where pupils can debate and analyse what is moral or what was moral then and now. (Kate, Teacher of English)

Baines et al. (2016) found that history education can provide opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking about moral and ethical issues, develop a sense of empathy and compassion, and become more engaged citizens. In accordance with this, Jennifer explained that in the study of history, a range of topics related to democracy, government, and law, such as communism and capitalism ideologies, understanding democracy and its advantages over dictatorship, are covered comprehensively. She exemplified that:

In A-level history, we do a module on the civil rights movement, and students had quite a large debate about what it was between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, but the basis of the argument was about whether violent methods versus peaceful methods are more efficient. And obviously, with that in we had to debate what is how? How can we judge what is good and bad violence? So, we're teaching morality through judgement and using evidence for that. (Jennifer, Teacher of History)

As Jennifer's response indicates, it can be challenging to differentiate civic virtues from morality, as noted by Lovat et al. (2017). Civic virtues refer to the qualities necessary to fulfil one's obligations and

responsibilities as a citizen in a democracy and a broader society, allowing individuals to pursue a good life with others and fall under the classification of moral virtues (Lovat et al., 2017).

Moreover, some of the participants articulated that they aim to develop students' understanding of how to be a good member of the society as part of their school ethos. Laila, for example, illustrated this commitment by describing community-focused initiatives at her school, such as organizing charity collections and undertaking a "green walk" to clean up litter in the vicinity.

Similarly, Julia highlighted a range of extracurricular activities geared towards instilling a sense of community participation and character development among students. She emphasized the integral role of these activities in fostering an understanding of students' place in the broader world, their personal responsibilities, and their contributions to the community. Examples included school trips, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, and active participation in charity events, including food bank collections.

So, things like, we've just collected for the food bank this week, so that they understand that not everybody gets well fed and that they can contribute to helping somebody else in their wider community. So, I mean we have roles and responsibilities that pupils would take. we have a charity rep for each class, and they all contribute to charity events that we run. I think that's all part of what I would say is the character building. I think it's endemic to the school that rather than it being anything that's specifically taught. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

The Jubilee Centre (2022) emphasizes that character education should aim for both individual and societal flourishing, with civic virtues playing a crucial role in promoting social responsibility, civic engagement, and the common good. Although the term 'civic virtues' was not explicitly mentioned, the teachers in the study were found to consider contributing to the wider community as an important part of students' moral development. This was exemplified through various subject areas, such as history and English, and extracurricular activities that focused on developing students' understanding of being good citizens and their responsibilities within society. The teachers' views align with the Jubilee Centre's perspective on the importance of civic virtues in four-dimensional taxonomy of the character education.

Intellectual virtues

According to the text, intellectual virtues are qualities that individuals need to possess to guide their quest for knowledge and information. These virtues include curiosity, critical thinking, and open-mindedness, (Jubilee Centre, 2022; Bailin and Battersby, 2011). However, one intellectual virtue that

deserves special mention is phronesis or practical wisdom, which is the overall quality of knowing what is desirable and what is not desirable when the demands of two or more virtues collide and being able to integrate such demands into an acceptable course of action (Jubilee Centre, 2022). According to Bailin and Battersby (2011), possessing these intellectual virtues is essential for developing a well-rounded and informed individual.

Teaching intellectual virtues is an important aspect of education, and subject areas can play a crucial role in this process. Bailin and Battersby (2011) suggest that teaching intellectual virtues within subject areas not only helps students develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter but also cultivates their intellectual character. Research has shown that different subject areas can play a significant role in teaching intellectual virtues. For instance, Muis et al. (2015) and Wong (2016) found that science education can help in developing curiosity and scepticism, which are vital intellectual virtues for scientific inquiry (Wong, 2016). When Robert said:

So, whilst it is more prevalent in subjects, like, PSHE or RE, or maybe some humanity subjects, it would be fairly apparent, in subjects like science too, which lends to kind of sometimes making moralistic decisions and judgements about certain things. (Robert, Teacher of PE)

He regarded science as a domain in which students can render moral judgments. Leena, a science teacher, likewise affirmed that science offers a conducive forum for engendering discourse on moral issues such as abortion, blood transfusion, and the like, via scientific inquiry.

You must teach them what to do and how to do everything within the correct scientific knowledge. (Leena, Teacher of Science)

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that none of the teachers, including Robert and Leena, alluded to the role of science in teaching students how to pose inquiries, seek evidence, and challenge assumptions, which fosters a sense of curiosity and scepticism, as expounded by Wong in his discussion on the function of science in teaching intellectual virtues like curiosity (Wong, 2016).

Furthermore, research has shown that teaching intellectual virtues through specific subject areas can have a positive impact on students' overall intellectual development. For instance, a study conducted by Selingo (2015) found that students who were exposed to history education that emphasized critical thinking skills showed significant improvement in their overall reasoning and problem-solving abilities. Three teachers, Jennifer, David, and Leena, expressed that history is a good place to create questions to understand different perspectives and making judgements.

The whole point of history is to create questions that make students think about both sides of the argument and debate it. (Jennifer, Teacher of History and RE)

Similarly, history education can teach critical thinking and open-mindedness. As students learn about past events, they are exposed to different perspectives and interpretations, which requires critical thinking and open-mindedness to evaluate the evidence and draw conclusions (McPeck, 2016). In line with this, David, Geography and RE teacher, articulated that he sought to direct students' focus toward diverse lifestyles as this entails ensuring that students comprehend the existence of varied choices individuals make in life, choices that can be subject to diverse interpretations. Importantly, his approach is not aimed at instructing students to adopt specific choices; rather, it is centered on equipping them with the analytical skills necessary to assess arguments and formulate independent evaluations.

As the data reveals, by engaging in historical inquiry, students can learn to evaluate evidence and arguments, recognize biases and fallacies, and make well-reasoned judgements. Similarly, Oplatka and Arar (2017) found that religious education can help students develop moral values and ethical decision-making skills through judgements. Julia and Jane stated that students can explore values and beliefs in RE and make up their minds about their own preferences.

Understanding what and why to believe something, reasoning and justifying their understanding is important part of moral education, and RE is a place where students can do this. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

In summary, subject areas can play an essential role in teaching intellectual virtues, with science education in teaching curiosity and scepticism, history and RE in teaching critical thinking and making individual judgements. Such an approach can help students develop their intellectual virtues and ultimately contribute to their overall intellectual development.

Performance virtues

Performance virtues refer to the qualities that enable individuals to perform at their best and achieve success in their endeavours (Jubilee Centre, 2022). These virtues generally referred as 'soft skills' which include perseverance, self-discipline, grit, determination, confidence, teamwork, and resilience- which is accepted as the most significant one described as "the ability to bounce back from negative experiences" (Jubilee Centre, 2022, p. 8). Research has shown that these virtues can be taught and developed through specific subject areas and educational practices. Six teachers articulated that physical education (PE) can play a significant role in developing performance virtues such as perseverance, resilience, teamwork.

Robert, PE teacher, emphasised that PE provides opportunities for moral education through the teaching of fairness, sportsmanship, comradeship, and coping with defeat and loss. The competitive aspects of physical education, such as invasion games, can develop qualities in young people, including honesty and the ability to display class under pressure. Such character-building opportunities are central to developing moral education in students.

I think PE is a wonderful conduit for moral education... You know, people from different backgrounds coming together on the same team, that play hard but play fair, that ability to cope with defeat and loss and how you react to that and how that makes you as a person, that competitive side of you not spilling over into something that becomes unpleasant. I would say some of those very much what I would call kind of character-building opportunities that you find in PE are central to developing a moral education in students in terms of how to behave sometimes in difficult, high-pressure, and high-emotion situations. (Robert, PE)

According to a study by Breslin, Shannon, and Haughey (2017), physical education can help students develop perseverance by providing opportunities for them to set and achieve goals, face challenges, and develop resilience. Similarly, Julia supported this role of PE and stated that besides teaching things like the difference between right and wrong, following the rules, respect for your opposition, not cheating, avoiding gamesmanship, PE is a great place for teamwork activities.

PE is quite a good and deliberate unit where we teach them responsibility. You make every member of a group add responsibility. So, one person might be responsible for making sure that the group will have the right kit for a lesson. Another person might be responsible for organising a practice. Somebody else might be responsible for umpiring a game or referring a game, and everybody in the team has a responsibility and that gives them a kind of get points for it. So, the better they are at all these things, it kind of makes they have a collective responsibility towards being successful as a group of people. it's not about being the winning team in a competition but it's about being a team that's effective and functions well together and is supportive of each other. It's surprising a lot of people think that you can't teach responsibility, but we can in PE. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

Since Robert and Julia were PE teachers, they were aware of the role of PE in developing performance virtues, besides other aspects. In agreement with this, Denis, Maths teacher, also stated that PE is a great place for developing sense of responsibility and patience. Moreover, Michael, MFL and RE teacher, referred to role of PE by saying:

I think, subjects where people are working together are the best ones. I mean things like PE, whether working as a group, and playing team sports, well then, I think that is a good place for things to come in.' (Michael, MFL & RE)

In addition to PE, research show that other subject areas can also play a role in teaching performance virtues, such as language arts, and drama. For example, language arts education can help students develop the performance virtue of creativity. Through reading and writing, students learn to express themselves in imaginative and innovative ways, which requires creativity and originality (Craft, 2005; Efland, 2002). David was the only teacher reflecting this role of literature among the participants.

The reason is that I'm thinking about English, I'm thinking about poetry and literature, creative writing, talking, and thinking about ways of experiencing different cultures through different reading material, not necessarily the English language as a means of communication, but certainly a way to look at how different people react. So, I think English is a fantastic medium to deliver that. (David, Teacher of Geography and RE)

Similar to literature, drama was found to be an effective way of teaching performance virtues such as teamwork, communication, and empathy (Bolton, 2013). Collaborative performance projects can promote teamwork and effective communication (Cohen, 2015), while role-playing activities can help students develop empathy towards others by exploring different perspectives and emotions (Wagner, 2016). Kate and Julia expressed the importance of arts and drama in moral education, with Kate stated that they provide great opportunities for teamwork and develop sense of empathy, as well as exploring morality in the roles that students play.

Drama and arts can look at how the concept of democracy is presented, whether it has the concept of power or beauty through a play. Students also explore and develop social and emotional skills through the roles they play. (Kate, Teacher of English)

All in all, drama and art can serve as valuable instruments for imparting performance virtues. Furthermore, studies have indicated that music can also facilitate the development of performance virtues such as self-discipline and the ability to set long-term goals (Moreno et al., 2018). Nonetheless, the data is constrained in terms of instances of how drama, arts, and music can contribute to character development, owing to the scarcity of participants from these subject areas.

Overall, the concept of performance virtues, which are also called soft skills, enable individuals to perform at their best and achieve success in their endeavours. It is clear that PE can play a significant role in developing performance virtues, such as perseverance, resilience, and teamwork. Other subject areas such as literature, arts, and drama can also contribute to performance virtues and so character development.

In sum, the study emphasizes that character education is not limited to a particular subject area but should be an integral part of the curriculum of all subjects. Teachers should aim to develop students'

moral, civic, intellectual, and performance virtues to promote their overall character development and contribute to individual and societal flourishing.

Indeed, the four categories of virtue cannot be taught in isolation from one another. Character education is all about their integration, guided by the overarching intellectual virtue of practical wisdom or 'good sense'. (Jubilee Centre, 2022, p. 8)

The primary objective of the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education is to foster both individual and societal flourishing. Achieving this goal requires more than just subject teachers focusing on cultivating the desired values or virtues in their students. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to be involved in this effort. Furthermore, as McPhail (1973) advocates, the integration of moral education into the whole school curriculum, through projects like Lifeline, prioritizing students' needs and experiences is necessary with the participation of all members of the school community.

The overwhelming consensus among the study participants, comprising fifteen out of eighteen teachers, is a shared belief that moral education, encompassing the imparting of values and virtues to students, is a collective responsibility applicable to all members of the school community, regardless of their roles or positions. While the remaining three teachers did not explicitly articulate this viewpoint, their explanations strongly indicate a parallel alignment with the overarching perspective.

Mariam, a teacher of Psychology, for example, stresses the importance of integrating moral education across all subject areas. Her perspective underscores the need for continual conversations about moral values, rejecting the notion of confining it to a limited timeframe each week. Both Julia and Mariam contribute to the consensus that moral education is a shared commitment that should permeate all aspects of the educational experience.

I think that's where, but I wouldn't pick any single individual subject that has been more important than others. I think everybody has a role to play in that. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

The subsequent section intends to examine the means of promoting values or virtues as a shared responsibility and the significance of school ethos in this pursuit.

The School Ethos and Ways of Cultivating Virtues

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues has developed a framework for character education that includes the ways of cultivation character virtues as being "caught, taught, and sought" (Jubilee Centre, 2022). This approach suggests that character is both caught and taught by educators and can

be sought by students through their own efforts, which provides a comprehensive framework for character education that recognizes the importance of both intentional teaching and positive role modelling in fostering the development of character virtues in students (Jubilee Centre, 2022).

Character Caught

The "caught" component refers to the idea that character can be caught through the positive role modelling of educators and other influential individuals in a student's life. This can involve observing and emulating the positive character traits of others, such as honesty, kindness, and respect.

The idea of the "caught" component of character development is supported by research in social learning theory, which suggests that individuals learn by observing and imitating the behaviour of others (Bandura, 1977). Moreover, according to Wilson (1973) and McPhail (1972), educators hold a crucial role in moral education by serving as role models. Hand (2017) further underscores that moral education should encompass emotional and behavioural dimensions, fostering virtues such as empathy, compassion, integrity, and resilience, besides the cognitive development of the students. In the context of character education, this means that students are more likely to adopt positive character traits when they see these traits modelled by their teachers and other influential adults (Nucci & Narvaez, 2008).

Upon inquiry regarding the values and virtues that educators intend to cultivate in their students, all respondents cited their school's ethos in conjunction with the other values or virtues they mentioned. In addition, when they talked about how to teach these in their practice, they mentioned several ways including being good role models (n:11), creating a space for moral discussions wherever possible (n:6), being objective (n:5), having good relationships with students(n:4), and delivering PSHE curriculum(n:6). Moreover, they also mentioned the values or virtues in their school ethos presented in the walls of the school or classrooms (n:10). David, for example, emphasised that their actions and interactions have an impact on student's moral development, so being good role models is important.

What you will do is make sure that you model good behaviour and good practice through your actions as a staff member. it's making sure that you're treating everybody with dignity and respect within the class to ensure that they learn that lesson, and learn the way of dealing with others, it's talking about tolerance and respect when we talk about diversity. My job is to facilitate that conversation and ensure that conversation is happening. (David, Teacher of Geography and RE)

Similar with David, ten participants emphasized that their primary responsibility concerning moral education is to serve as positive role models. Martin, for instance, specifically highlighted the

importance of his role as a Deputy Head and expressed that his interactions with school staff should align with what they want the students to acquire.

I need to lead that in the way I treat my staff as well as in the way I treat my students, and that's how the ethos of my school needs to run. Because if I'm preaching to my students, that I need to be compassionate and kind, but I'm being horrible to my staff then my ethos will be confused, and it won't then travel throughout the organisation. So, I think you are morally educating people, by your example, whether you want to or whether you don't want to. So better to be deliberate with it. (Martin, Teacher of RE and Deputy Head)

Moreover, studies have shown that positive teacher-student relationships can have a significant impact on students' character development (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). When teachers model positive character traits and build strong relationships with their students, they create a positive learning environment that fosters the development of key character traits, such as respect, empathy, and responsibility (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). In line with this, Rita expressed that character building is closely tied to their in daily interactions with students.

it's our relationship with students, the way I communicate, the way I've approached them, the way we solve problems, and the way I treat them, they could learn from that. They could learn from my behaviour. They could learn from how I pass these values much more than my subject knowledge as a Spanish teacher. (Rita, Teacher of MFL)

It is evident that the majority of teachers recognize their responsibility to serve as role models for students in teaching good deeds, not solely through their interactions with students, but also through their associations with other members of the school community. In addition to the aforementioned, it was noted that all teachers included their school ethos as an integral part of the moral education within the school environment. Ten teachers particularly highlighted that the school ethos was visually represented through the display of values or virtues on the walls of the school corridors or classrooms. Conversely, five teachers mentioned that school assemblies were used as an opportunity to present and discuss each of the values embodied in the school's ethos. On the contrary, three teachers reported their lack of knowledge regarding the ethos or related activities as they were new to their respective schools.

It is evident that the schools in which the participant teachers were employed have a robust ethos designed to facilitate the development of their students' character by creating opportunities and events where students can observe and internalize the values and principles espoused by their school, as suggested by the Jubilee Centre's framework (2022). However, it is essential to acknowledge that

the information was obtained during the Covid-19 pandemic limitations, and schools were conducting remote teaching at that time. Consequently, fifteen teachers acknowledged that their ability to model good behaviour or present their school ethos was impeded.

Character Taught

The "taught" component of the Jubilee Centre's approach to character education refers to the deliberate instruction and modelling of character traits to students (Jubilee Centre, 2022). This involves structured and intentional teaching of character traits and virtues in the classroom through curricular lessons and co-curricular activities (Harrison et al., 2017; Jubilee Centre, 2022). This can include explicit instruction on virtues such as compassion, resilience, and humility, as well as the integration of character education into academic subjects such as history, literature, and science (Jubilee Centre, 2022).

Once asked whether they are teaching moral education in their practice, as presented and discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, most teachers articulated that they are teaching different aspects of the four-dimensional taxonomy within their subject areas. Given that this was previously discussed in detail, the findings regarding subject areas will not be reiterated at this point.

In addition to the subject areas, all teachers reported having designated form times or Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) sessions where they intentionally deliver topics related to moral education. Only two teachers stated that they did not have a form group at the time data was collected. This topic was also discussed in Chapter 4 under the PSHE section. However, two limitations related to explicitly teaching character traits were highlighted by the teachers.

Firstly, constrained by limited time and an overarching emphasis on academic success, teachers reported resorting to delivering PowerPoint presentations and follow-up activities during their form times or PSHE sessions. Jane, a Teacher of Maths and Economics, highlighted the challenge of time constraints, expressing a desire for more flexibility to enhance creativity and engagement in her teaching.

I wish to have more flexibility in terms of my timing, which will allow me to plan something a lot better and utilise my thinking and make sure that we can have a bit more engagement with the material. Unfortunately, sometimes time is the main constraint. (Jane, Teacher of Maths and Economics)

She remarked that she did not have sufficient time to prepare for an effective teaching of form time where they address their school ethos or PSHE curriculum. Similarly, the time limitation emerged as a

recurring theme, with Martin, a Teacher of RE, echoing concerns about prioritizing subject areas over form time due to the pressures of academic scrutiny.

Because actually, at the end of the day, that's where they're getting their lesson observations is their exam results that they're being judged on (Martin, Teacher of RE).

Secondly, some teachers admitted a lack of knowledge and training in moral education, adversely affecting their confidence in delivering these lessons. Rita, for example, mentioned that she lacked knowledge due to her language barrier and only delivering the materials given by the PSHE coordinator.

First, I prepare myself. I need to read that; I need to be aware of all the topics and all the important points in the PowerPoint. So I have to search for some terminology because I'm Spanish, so I don't understand some terminology quite well. Later, to be honest, it's quite easy because they're really well-prepared PSHE PowerPoints and I am just delivering what is provided for me. (Rita, Teacher of MFL)

Likewise, Mariam articulated that at times they are merely covering the topics provided to them as a "checklist" exercise. Furthermore, Chris reported a similar concern by adding his insufficient training in delivering moral education.

There are some specific topics that I'm not feeling comfortable with when it comes to talking about sexuality or things like that. I prefer not to talk about that. However, if I have to, I do it. I deliver the presentations. But it doesn't mean I feel comfortable talking about this kind of stuff because I am not trained on this matter. (Chris, Teacher of MFL)

Adding to the concerns about teacher preparedness, Martin raised a noteworthy issue related to form tutors. He pointed out that if a form tutor is a math teacher, they may encounter discomfort in facilitating discussions on certain elements of PSHE. Martin highlighted the specialization of RE teachers in this domain, making the teaching of PSHE a more natural and aligned aspect of their expertise. In contrast, a math teacher, unaccustomed to such discussions, might face challenges when taking on the role of a form tutor.

So for them (RE teachers), teaching PSHE is very natural, whereas for perhaps a maths teacher, we might not be natural and therefore if you form today as a math teacher, you might struggle. (Martin, Teacher of MFL)

Despite the limitations mentioned, the data indicated that the majority of teachers were intentionally teaching moral education, including their school ethos, either through subject areas or dedicated form and/or PSHE time. However, due to the nature of the data collected, it was not possible to examine

whether this explicit teaching of moral education had an effect on students' knowledge, understanding, and behaviour regarding character, nor whether it led to improvements in academic achievement and overall well-being, as reported by Harrison et al. (2017) and Lickona (2012), respectively.

Character Sought

Finally, the "sought" component refers to the idea that students actively seek out opportunities to practice and develop positive character traits in their daily lives. This involves setting goals for personal growth and actively seeking out opportunities to practice virtues and strengthen character (Lovat et al., 2017), and participating in extracurricular activities, community service projects, and other opportunities for personal growth and development (Arthur, Harrison, & Gunn, 2017). By seeking out these opportunities, students can gain a deeper understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as develop a sense of purpose and direction for their lives.

The study's results indicate that the four-dimensional taxonomy's "sought" approach is being implemented by certain subject areas and extracurricular activities. As seen from the first section of this chapter, the subject areas of PE, drama, and arts were the places where students can have an opportunity to acquire the character strengths through 'performing' activities. In addition to subject areas, fourteen educators revealed that they conduct assemblies, wherein discussions and activities pertaining to the school ethos and other moral education topics take place. For instance, Michael, a teacher of MFL and RE, elaborated on the content covered in these assemblies. He mentioned sessions aimed at instilling values of self-sufficiency and responsibility among students. Additionally, he highlighted the regular success assemblies where achievements, both within and outside the school, are celebrated. For Michael, this multifaceted approach in assemblies reflects a commitment to instil a broader understanding of responsibility, success, and the interconnectedness of individual achievements with the collective ethos of the school.

We have regular success assemblies where we celebrate people's success in and out of the school, so I mean anyone who does any extracurricular activities linked to the school. We still celebrate those in the school to show them that all those things are important and that is what happens in the building that we care about the greater picture. (Michael, Teacher of MFL and RE)

Additionally, teachers also mentioned several extracurricular activities, such as supporting charity works like Foodbank donation (n:5), debate clubs for deliberations on current ethical and moral issues (n:4), theatre and drama performances by students and professionals alike (n:3), activities that focus

on the school's values (n:3), and virtue projects incentivizing the students with rewards and points for showcasing virtues (n:2).

Laila and Julia expounded that they engage in volunteering activities and endeavour to delegate responsibilities to their students, with the aim of increasing their awareness on pertinent issues and building their characters.

We do participate in the local community so sometimes we do collect for certain charity. I remember last year we did a green walk, what we called a green walk, where we went to pick up litters around the area, residential area around the school. (Laila, Teacher of MFL)

Out of the eighteen teachers, Julia was the only teacher worked in a school where character development is an integral and explicit component of their school policy, and where they have implemented a virtues project with well-prepared and organized curriculum, materials, and activities. Julia shed light on the school's approach to character building, emphasizing its multifaceted nature. She highlighted the significance of school trips and visits as integral components contributing to students' understanding of their place in the world. The involvement of pupils in initiatives such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award was underscored as a means to cultivate a sense of personal responsibility for their well-being and that of others, particularly within challenging environments. However, to comprehensively investigate the influence of this intervention on students, further research is imperative, with a specific emphasis on the perceptions and encounters of the students themselves. As the scope of this study is limited to the perspectives and experiences of teachers, any comment on this matter would be deemed impracticable. Furthermore, Julia emphasized the active participation of students in the wider community,

I also think their contribution to the wider community. I mean we have roles and responsibilities that pupils would take, we have a charity rep for each class, and they all contribute to charity events that we run. I think that's all part of what I would say is character building, which is endemic to the school rather than it being anything that's specifically taught. (Julia, Teacher of PE)

Wilson (1972, 1973) argues that having a good social arrangement of the schools with the focus of moral education as the main goal is essential. He argues that having a house system where there are teachers with specific roles to support different aspects of moral education is very important with a well-designed curriculum, methods and activities developed by the leadership team. Although Julia did not mention use of methodology of moral education as Wilson describes, she appears to be the only teacher implementing a comprehensive, whole-school approach to character education.

As a final point, all teachers reported that their school assemblies and other extracurricular activities were disrupted due to the COVID-19 restrictions and transition to remote learning schedules, which seem to have limited their responses regarding to these activities.

Summary

In the first section of this chapter, the roles of subject areas were considered according to the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education. In line with the Jubilee Centre's taxonomy, the findings of this study suggest that character education should not be limited to a particular subject area but should be incorporated into the curriculum of all subjects. This study found that while humanities subjects such as Religious Education played a more prominent role in nurturing moral virtues, other subjects like science, history, and English also played a crucial role in developing students' moral understanding.

Furthermore, the importance of civic virtues in character education, which are essential in promoting social responsibility, civic engagement and the common good was highlighted. The participant teachers emphasized that contributing to the wider community should be an integral part of students' moral development. This can be achieved through various subject areas, such as history and English, which help students understand their responsibilities within society and develop critical thinking skills.

In addition to moral and civic virtues, subject areas can also contribute to intellectual and performance virtues. Science education can teach curiosity and scepticism, while literature, arts, and drama can contribute to developing creativity and empathy. Physical education, on the other hand, can play a significant role in developing performance virtues such as perseverance, resilience, and teamwork.

Considering the study's findings, it is emphasized that character education must not be confined to a specific subject area, but instead must be incorporated into the curriculum of all subjects. The responsibility of teachers is to foster the moral, civic, intellectual, and performance virtues of their students, thereby facilitating their comprehensive character development and enhancing individual and societal well-being.

However, the framework of the Jubilee Centre's taxonomy includes the *practical wisdom* as part of intellectual virtues, which entails "considered deliberation, well-founded judgement, and the vigorous enactment of decisions" (Jubilee Centre, 2022, p. 8). The process of character development places practical wisdom at its core, as it is widely recognized as the unifying virtue encompassing all facets of the four-dimensional taxonomy. However, none of the participants provided any elucidation regarding the enactment of decisions. While a few teachers mentioned school activities such as badge collection

or point accrual for adhering to the school's values or ethos, it appears that the practical dimension of character development was not given due consideration by the teachers.

The second section of the chapter investigates the methods of fostering values and/or virtues by examining the roles of teachers, subject areas, and school ethos. The Jubilee Centre's framework for character education involves "caught, taught, and sought" aspects of cultivating character virtues. Findings from previous research and the data collected in this study reveal that, in addition to the roles of subject areas, the representation of character traits through teachers' behaviours, teacher-student relationships, and, most crucially, through schools' internal policies, play significant roles in cultivating character virtues. Teachers, who are the students' role models, can implicitly demonstrate good behaviours that the students can emulate. Furthermore, most teachers explicitly teach moral, civic, intellectual, and performance virtues through their subject areas, where relevant, and during form or PSHE times. Finally, subject areas such as PE, drama, and arts are important venues where students can perform these character strengths. In addition, all participants in the study acknowledged the importance of the school's ethos in cultivating virtues and creating a positive learning environment and organising extracurricular activities, as stated by Jubilee Centre's framework (2022). However, it is significant to note that the study's scope was limited to teachers' perspectives and experiences due to COVID-19 restrictions and transition to remote learning, which disrupted school assemblies and extracurricular activities.

Chapter 7: Conclusion of the thesis

Introduction

In this final Chapter, I return to the main research question: What are the perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers in England regarding the teaching of moral education?

I address the question by analysing the key findings that were presented in Chapter Four, where teachers' understanding of moral education and their interpretation of related policies were discussed; Chapter Five where I explored teachers' roles and responsibilities and their professional development experiences concerning moral education; and finally, Chapter Six where I analysed the role of subject areas in contributing students' moral development with a specific focus on character building dimensions. These themes were investigated in light of their relationship to the study's overarching question and three sub questions, as established in Chapters One and three and restated here:

What are the perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers in England regarding the teaching of moral education?

RQ.1. How do teachers understand moral education both regardless of and regarding to the government policies, and how they implement these policies in their practice?

RQ.2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their role and responsibilities in the moral education of students, and how do they consider the effectiveness of their professional development experiences related to teaching moral education?

RQ.3. What potential contributions could different subject areas make to the students' moral development?

Understanding Moral Education Policy

Regarding the first sub-question, an assessment was conducted on teachers' comprehension of moral education through two facets. Initially, the teachers were prompted to elaborate on their overall perception of moral education, while abstaining from providing any policy-related hints to avert bias. Subsequently, the teachers were questioned about their experiences and perceptions of moral education policies through the use of stimulus material.

In the analysis of the first facet, I aimed to investigate whether a correlation exists between the theories of moral education and the participants' understanding and definitions of the concept, with the aim of ascertaining the extent to which they are cognizant of these theoretical constructs. Similar to the aspects of moral education as seen from the historical overview, teachers referred teaching Christian values, development of autonomy and moral reasoning, fostering community values to enhance social cohesion, and character building. However, except Martin, who is an RE teacher and Deputy Head of the school, mentioning Aristotelian virtues, none of the participants related their understanding of moral education to theoretical perspectives. Instead, most of them linked their understanding of moral education to government guidelines, their curriculum, or PSHE lessons, which parallels my personal experience. Since Ball et al. (2012) argue, policies have a significant impact on teachers' understanding of a concept, in this case moral education. In addition to the national policies, the internal policies within their schools also appear to affect their comprehension, as argued in Chapter six. Moreover, as considered in Chapter five, teachers having lack of initial and continuous education concerning moral education, except for a few courses or modules on moral education policies, may explain their tendency to reference policies when defining moral education.

In the second facet, teachers were questioned about their understanding of the government's expectations for students' moral development without specific policy reference, revealing that while most had a grasp of the policies' overall aims, some showed a lack of awareness. It is evident that the participating teachers possess a partial or complete understanding of the government's policies of SMSC, PSHE, citizenship, FBVs, RSE, and character education. Ball *et al.* (2012) argue that schools and teachers are expected to possess the knowledge and capability to implement numerous policies that have been developed for them by external entities. The data shows that teachers are generally supported by the SLT or PSHE coordinator of their schools in terms of the policy expectations and updates, therefore they are able to implement those policies, at least partially as argued detailly in Chapter four.

policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts. Part of their texts will be rejected, selected out, ignored, deliberately misunderstood, responses may be frivolous, etc. (Bowe and Ball, 1992, p. 22)

Bowe and Ball's argument that some policies were prioritized while others were ignored is supported by the data, which shows that all participants prioritize PSHE education and character development as part of their school policy, due to the compulsory RSHE curriculum, internal school policies, and time limitations. The majority of teachers indicated that they were allocated a designated and consistent time slot for PSHE, and they follow a particular curriculum or program that covers various

aspects of moral education policies fully or partially. In contrast to the emphasis given to PSHE, the spiritual component of SMSC education was found to be neglected or rejected in most schools, with the exception of a Catholic school, likely due to its sensitive nature. Additionally, the use of the words "Fundamental" and "British" was deliberately avoided when teaching the FBVs.

Overall, the data suggests that while teachers' understanding of moral education is influenced by policy, their interpretation and implementation of such policies differ. Some teachers struggle to translate policy objectives into meaningful classroom practices, while others face challenges in implementing policies due to lack of resources or support. The study underscores the complexity of policy implementation in schools and highlights the importance of providing teachers with appropriate training and support to effectively implement moral education policies.

Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities

Regarding the second sub-question, an assessment was conducted on teachers' views on their role and responsibilities in the moral education of students and their perceptions of the effectiveness of their professional development experiences in this area. Opposite to their perceptions of the concept of moral education, teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities seem not affected by the policies. By considering this, for the analysis and discussion of the related data, professional development theory was utilised instead of continuing with the concept of policy enactment theory.

The study found that teachers believe role modelling good behaviour (Jubilee Centre, 2021; Nucci & Narvaez, 2008) and creating a safe and respectful classroom environment was important for promoting moral education (Cefai, 2008; Anderman, 1999; Lumpkin, 2008). However, although the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2021) require them to establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, set challenging goals, and model positive attitudes and behaviour, none of the teachers referenced any government requirements regarding their professional responsibilities, except two. On the other hand, it is found that schools' internal policies have an impact on teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities concerning moral education, especially where schools have a strong ethos.

Furthermore, the study reveals that teachers have insufficient professional training in moral education, with many reporting pre-service and/or in-service training or additional support related to meeting the requirements of curriculums such as PSHE, FBVs, and RHSE. According to professional development theory, teachers must possess more than just technical and subject knowledge; they must also show a profound comprehension of educational concepts and the debates surrounding

aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced educational practices, engage with educational research, and exhibit strong ethical reasoning skills to successfully navigate ethical decision-making challenges within the classroom (Orchard and Winch, 2015). Most teachers articulated that they are only delivering the PSHE curriculum and materials like technicians due to a lack of time and professional knowledge and skills. Some teachers feel restricted in conveying provided content and lack confidence in teaching moral education, including sex education, due to this reason. Only one teacher, Denis, expressed having sufficient initial education about moral discussions to develop his personal moral reasoning skills, which is seen as an essential aspect of professional development (Lumpkin, 2008).

Although most teachers expressed teaching moral education through PSHE and form times, and so they are just delivering the content like technicians, I argue that moral education is not limited to the PSHE curriculum or other national policies. The data discussed in Chapters 4 and 6 show that teachers have the professional skills and experiences of navigating moral discussions in an objective manner by challenging pupils' views and providing students with opportunities to explore and evaluate the values, beliefs, and attitudes of themselves and others through their subject areas and other extracurricular activities within their school contexts. Moreover, as argued in Chapter 6, good manners can be 'caught' by the role models through observation and communication and teachers seem to have this knowledge since role modelling was stated as the main responsibility for most of them. Therefore, mere evaluation of teachers' professional knowledge and skills with their ITE and CPD courses would limit understanding of their personal and professional abilities.

Considering this, teachers were asked how they have developed their understanding of moral education and the majority of them cited experiential and practical knowledge as key contributors, with some also mentioning their personal beliefs, PGCE courses, Teachers' Standards, schools' ethos and community values, and the virtues project. Moreover, most teachers seem to be aware of their weaknesses in teaching moral education and once asked they made suggestions for better and more effective ITE and CPD programmes according to their needs including workshops, ongoing discussions with educators, personal modelling conversations, and training in methods, materials, and model lessons.

Role of Subject Areas

Regarding the third sub-question, an assessment was conducted on teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education with regard to their subject areas as well as other subjects. As discussed in the literature review, character education emerges as the most organized and

comprehensive approach to moral education (Lickona, 1991), especially the four-dimensional taxonomy may provide a useful framework for integrating character education into various subject areas, as it aims to cultivate moral, intellectual, performance, and civic virtues (Jubilee Centre, 2021). Therefore, the four-dimensional taxonomy of character education was utilized as the theoretical framework for analysing the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding the potential contributions of various subject areas to students' moral education.

It is found that while humanities subjects such as Religious Education play a crucial role in developing moral virtues, civic virtues can be fostered through various subject areas like history and English, and intellectual and performance virtues through science education, literature, arts, drama, and physical education. In sum, the study emphasizes that character education is not limited to a particular subject area but should be an integral part of the curriculum of all subjects. Teachers should aim to develop students' moral, civic, intellectual, and performance virtues to promote their overall character development and contribute to individual and societal flourishing. In addition, achieving the goal of individual and societal flourishing requires more than just subject teachers, it is the responsibility of all members of the school community to be involved in this effort, as all participants agreed.

Upon examining teachers' understanding of moral education and their responsibilities as moral educators, along with the role of subject areas, the present study aimed to investigate approaches to teaching values and virtues. Specifically, the Jubilee Centre's character education framework of "caught, taught, and sought" was analysed. The study's findings indicated that teachers are modelling desired behaviours for students to emulate, thereby allowing the character to be caught. In addition, they explicitly teach values and virtues during PSHE and form times, as well as in subject areas where opportunities arise. Moreover, they provide students with opportunities to perform character strengths through subject areas such as PE, drama, and arts. Lastly, it is found that the ethos of the school and the extracurricular activities based on it are of importance in nurturing virtues and fostering a positive learning environment.

In conclusion, this study offers insights into how secondary school teachers perceive and experience moral education, providing a valuable reference point for both trainee and experienced teachers looking to enhance their practice in providing moral education to students. Furthermore, this study can offer an evidence-based perspective for school leadership teams when developing their internal policies and school ethos.

Contribution to knowledge

As stated in Chapter One, this study explored teachers' perceptions and experiences of secondary school teachers in England regarding the teaching of moral education. The research provides a significant contribution to education policy, specifically in relation to moral education policies such as SMSC, PSHE, citizenship education, FBVs, RHSE, and character education, analysed through the lens of policy enactment theory. Additionally, the study offers insights into education policy regarding teachers' training and evaluation, including the Teachers' Standards, ITT Core content framework, Education inspection framework, and Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework and School Inspection Handbook, from the perspective of professional development theory. Furthermore, the research sheds light on the potential contribution of subject areas to students' character building, viewed through Jubilee Centre's four-dimensional character education taxonomy. Finally, this study provides a significant contribution to the methodological literature in the education field through the implementation of stimulus material as an instrument during online interviews.

This study provides multiple unique contributions to the body of knowledge on moral education and has significant implications for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders invested in promoting moral education within the English education system.

1. The findings of this study indicate that teachers' comprehension of moral education is primarily influenced by government guidelines such as SMSC, PSHE, RHSE, citizenship, FBVs, and character education, rather than theoretical perspectives on moral, values, and character education. With the exception of one teacher, who referenced Aristotelian virtues, none of the teachers referred to any theoretical frameworks in their characterization of moral education. These results confirm the initial premise of the research, which was based on the researcher's personal experience of understanding moral education as presented in government policies.
2. When prompted about their perceptions of the government's expectations and requirements for students' moral development without referencing any particular policy, teachers mentioned SMSC, PSHE, citizenship education, FBVs, RHSE, and character education, as envisioned. This study analysed the teachers' comprehension and implementation of these policies and found that while most teachers possess some knowledge of these frameworks, they may lack specific details. The research results indicate that PSHE, with RHSE integrated into its syllabus, and character education are the policies that receive the most attention from teachers, possibly due to their recent implementation and inspection by Ofsted. These

findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how teachers perceive and implement moral education policies in the English education system.

3. Prior research (Ball et al., 2011; Ball, Maguire, et al., 2012; Braun et al., 2011; Day, 2019; Spillane et al., 2002) has established that policy enactment is a complex process, often resulting in policy alteration, simplification, or reconstruction. In some cases, interpretation and implementation may even become unlawful, as observed with Fundamental British Values. As such, it is essential for teachers to recognize the extent to which a policy can be interpreted to ensure its correct implementation. The researcher also observed that some teachers struggled to translate policy objectives into meaningful and relevant classroom practices and so implement the policies partially, as in the case of SMSC. The findings highlight the complexity of policy implementation in schools and underscore the importance of providing teachers with sufficient training and support to effectively implement policies related to moral education.
4. According to Bacchi (2009), the framing and communication of a policy can influence how it is perceived and implemented. The study found that schools and teachers are giving more attention to PSHE than any other moral education policy. All teachers have some knowledge of and teach PSHE to some extent, with PSHE or form time being the primary place where they cover moral education and related policies. The data also shows that schools are actively developing their PSHE curriculum according to the needs of their students, rather than implementing policies as a top-down process. However, this process is limited to teachers who are part of the PSHE leadership team, with other teachers mainly delivering what is provided to them.
5. Based on Ball et al.'s (2012) theory, policies may be disregarded or poorly implemented. The findings from this study suggest that Citizenship education is not given significant emphasis in schools, despite being mandated by legislation. It appears to exist as a "ghost subject," as noted by Arabaci (2022). While some aspects of Citizenship education may be taught within the PSHE, History, or RE curricula, none of the teachers established a clear connection between Citizenship education and moral education, apart from acknowledging its association with PSHE, SMSC, FBVs, and the general aim of promoting good citizenship. However, given the aims of Citizenship education, such as promoting active participation in a democratic society and understanding diverse identities, some teachers found it relevant in the context of RE and History.

6. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that all participants in the study perceive themselves as having a responsibility to teach moral education. When asked about their professional roles and responsibilities, regardless of their subject knowledge, the majority of teachers cited the importance of being good role models, providing a safe classroom environment for moral discussions, maintaining objectivity while moderating discussions, and motivating students to make sound choices or decisions. Although these roles are outlined in official guidelines such as the Teachers' Standards, ITT core content framework, and Early Career Framework, only two participants explicitly referred to these documents. As all participants received their initial teacher education in England, it is unlikely that they are unaware of these requirements. It is suggested that the lack of emphasis on moral education in official teacher requirements, coupled with school inspections focusing on other statutory guidance such as SMSC, PSHE, and RHSE, may contribute to the participants' lack of explicit reference to these documents.
7. Previous research has indicated that initial teacher education programs often lack support for candidate teachers' professional development in moral, values, or character education (Mead, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2010; Arthur et al., 2015; Sanderse and Cooke, 2021), as well as in meeting official requirements such as PSHE, SMSC, and citizenship (Revell and Arthur, 2007; Wolstenholme and Wills, 2016). However, much of this research has focused on candidate teachers, and the voices of in-service teachers have been largely absent. In order to give these teachers a voice and explore their pre-service and in-service training experiences, the participants were asked whether they had any program or course related to moral education during their teacher education programs. The results of this study are in line with previous research, indicating that the Initial Teacher Education programs do not adequately support the personal and professional growth of pre-service and in-service teachers in the area of moral education with the exception of a few sessions on policies such as SMSC, PSHE, and FBVs. None of the teachers mentioned any coursework or module that specifically focused on their personal and professional development, or that provided opportunities for discussing moral dilemmas or enhancing moral reasoning skills. Additionally, none of the teachers mentioned any coursework or module that allowed for the development of their own values (Mead, 2004) or character (Lumpkin, 2008).
8. The literature emphasizes that effective teaching requires good teachers to possess practical experience, theoretical knowledge, and strong interpersonal skills (Biesta, 2012; Berk, 2013).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) and Shulman (1987) argue that this also includes a deep understanding of subject matter, pedagogy, and knowledge of learners. In the context of moral education, teachers' knowledge of theories, pedagogy, learners' needs, and practical experience are crucial for effective teaching. The study's participants recognize the importance of practical experience and communication skills in teaching moral education and plan their programs based on students' and schools' needs. However, teachers often lack knowledge of theories of moral, values, or character education, and many express a need for further training in teaching methods, materials, and model lessons focused on moral education.

9. Darling-Hammond (2017) asserts that effective teaching is an ongoing process that requires continuous professional development, which should be part of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. The present study's findings suggest that teachers' recommendations for further ITE and CPD courses align with this idea that teachers need continuous professional development. Although most teachers did not receive initial training in any aspect of moral education, some stated that the CPD they received during their in-service periods helped fill this gap, even if the CPD was about official requirements. As proposed by Noddings (2017), teachers need to incorporate moral education into every aspect of teacher education, including coursework and field experiences. The recommendations provided by the participants concerning ITE and CPD courses indicate that most teachers are aware of the roles, duties, and competencies required to be professional teachers. However, their responses reveal that due to inadequate training, they encounter difficulties in demonstrating professional agency in relation to moral education.

10. Based on the researcher's findings, character education is considered the most structured and inclusive approach to moral education, particularly the four-dimensional taxonomy developed by the Jubilee Centre. The data reveals that this taxonomy provides a valuable structure for incorporating character education into various academic disciplines, as it seeks to foster moral, civic, intellectual, and performance values, and hence it should be integrated into the curriculum of all subjects. The study shows that while humanities subjects are more focused on nurturing moral virtues, science, history, and English also contribute to students' moral understanding. Moreover, teachers emphasized the significance of contributing to the wider community in students' moral development, so civic virtues are important in character education, promoting social responsibility, civic engagement, and the common good.

Additionally, subject areas can also contribute to intellectual and performance virtues, such as science teaching curiosity and scepticism, literature and arts developing creativity and empathy, and physical education fostering perseverance, resilience, and teamwork.

11. The research examined the methods of fostering values and virtues by analysing the roles of teachers, subject areas, and school ethos through the framework for character education by the Jubilee Centre that includes "caught, taught, and sought" aspects of cultivating virtues. The study found that, in addition to subject areas, teachers' behaviours, relationships with students, and schools' internal policies play significant roles in cultivating character virtues. The study participants recognized the importance of school ethos in fostering virtues and creating a positive learning environment, including extracurricular activities. The study highlights the importance of considering multiple factors in cultivating values and virtues.
12. Finally, this study provides a significant contribution to the methodological literature in the education field through the implementation of stimulus material as an instrument during online interviews. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the data was collected online, and a stimulus material was created, providing information on current moral education policies to stimulate teacher responses and gather more profound knowledge. Stimulus material is a valuable tool in the education field to obtain data on teaching techniques, teacher viewpoints, and student experiences (Hammersley, 2002). However, while there are some studies in health and social care, there is a lack of research in education that uses stimulus material in interviews. Therefore, this study makes a methodological contribution to the education field by utilizing stimulus material to understand how teachers interpret and implement moral education policies.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Policy

The findings from this study highlight the need for a well-designed and structured guidance for moral education in schools. To achieve this goal, it is recommended that a unified framework for moral education be developed, regardless of whether it is referred to as moral, values, or character education. This framework should clearly define the objectives, expectations, and implementation guidelines for moral education in the education system.

To promote consistent practices among teachers and encourage genuine dedication to moral education within schools, it is suggested that a dedicated time be added to the school syllabus for moral education, same as other subject areas. This will enable teachers to provide the desired attention to moral education without struggling with time constraints. Moreover, a curriculum and assessment criteria should be developed for this specified time to ensure that moral education is taken seriously and given the necessary attention.

To prevent any misinterpretation, confusion, or incorrect application of moral education policies, it is crucial that these policies are drafted in a clear, easily understandable, and succinct way that can be comprehended by all educational practitioners. Therefore, it is recommended that these policies are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that they reflect current best practices and are aligned with the unified framework for moral education. Furthermore, to establish a cohesive approach to moral education, it is imperative that the stipulations outlined in moral education policies be integrated into Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses.

In addition to these policies, there is a need to reassess the Teachers' Standards, Early Career, and Core Content Frameworks, integrating the prerequisites of moral education policies into these documents. Following the revision, enhancements can be made to the 'learn that' and 'learn how to' statements within the Professional Behaviours section. Subsequently, the refined details can be incorporated into ITE and CPD courses as part of the broader integration of moral education.

This integration is vital to thoroughly prepare and equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for the effective implementation of these policies. Additionally, the requirements of these policies must be incorporated into the subject-specific education provided during ITEs. This allows teachers to comprehend and explore the facets of these policies that can be effectively integrated into their respective curricula. Such an approach is anticipated to cultivate uniformity in instructional practices among educators, fostering a genuine dedication to moral education within schools.

Practice

As a suggestion for implementation of practice, it is crucial to recognize the contribution of three agencies in providing effective moral education: those responsible for teacher education, schools, and teachers.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs should focus on developing teachers' personal, professional, and practical skills for effective moral education. Teachers need a deep understanding of the concepts of moral education and debates surrounding

aims, curriculum, and pedagogy that have influenced their practices. This includes engaging with educational research and possessing strong moral reasoning skills to navigate moral decision-making challenges in the classroom.

For this purpose, the integration of moral education into Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses is essential. This can be achieved by incorporating dedicated modules that explore topics such as moral decision-making and the pivotal role of educators in fostering moral development. These courses provide aspiring teachers with a foundational understanding. Notable examples of such courses within ITE and CPD programs may include modules similar to the 'Values, Beliefs, and Society' module offered by the MA Education program at the Institute of Education, University College London, from which I personally gained insights into moral education theories. Furthermore, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has developed a program named the 'Module Series on Integrity and Ethics' (2023) for academics and professionals. This initiative aims to comprehensively address integral topics in integrity and ethics, including universal values, ethical considerations in public and private sectors, diversity, behavioural ethics, and gender mainstreaming.

Teacher education providers could formulate analogous courses tailored for undergraduate education programs, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), and CPD courses. Such programs could incorporate suggested readings, real-life case studies and scenarios, reflective practices where future teachers engage in introspective exercises, and foster collaborative learning environments such as discussion forums, workshops, and collaborative projects. This approach enables aspiring educators to explore and share experiences, challenges, and insights related to moral education, enriching their understanding and preparing them to navigate the dynamic and multifaceted landscape of moral education in their practice.

Additionally, practicing teachers must receive ongoing CPD during their in-service years, including updates on policies and requirements, workshops, opportunities for exchanging experiences with colleagues from in and out of school, personal modelling conversations, model lessons, and support for teaching sensitive issues.

Inner school policies play an undeniable role in teaching moral education. Schools should organize their curriculum and activities by including moral education as a main component. While planning the curriculum, the caught, taught, and sought aspects of character development must be prioritized for a more effective and resultful moral education. Headteachers and senior leadership team (SLT) members are responsible for implementing national and internal policies throughout the school. They

need to keep teachers updated and provide support for teachers, which could include providing materials, organizing activities, and arranging further CPD.

Lastly, teachers are the main actors of the moral education process. They spend a good amount of time with students, making it essential to be good role models and use every opportunity to support students' moral development, as well as their own. Teachers must improve their personal, professional, and practical knowledge and skills by attending further CPD, mastering their subject knowledge with aspects of moral education integrated, and experiencing their interpersonal skills.

Limitations

Similar to all forms of research, this particular study has its limitations. One such limitation concerns its inability to thoroughly examine the numerous intricacies and complexities of moral education, despite taking a broad approach to investigating teachers' perspectives and experiences in this area. Moreover, the study's scope is relatively extensive compared to other inquiries as it concentrated on moral education policies, teachers' professional experiences, and the role of subject areas in teaching it. This may constrain the study's ability to provide a comprehensive analysis of the various characteristics and elements of this topic.

This study relied solely on interviews with teachers to obtain their perspectives and professional experiences regarding moral education, from a methodological standpoint. While this approach provided valuable insights, it has certain limitations, such as solely representing the viewpoints of teachers. To gain a more comprehensive and diverse understanding of this subject, it may be advantageous to conduct interviews with a wider range of participants, including policymakers, ITE providers, members of SLTs, students, and parents. Additionally, methods like observations could have offered insights into the actual provision of moral education in practice, especially the observation of the school atmosphere would be beneficial for a better analysis of the impact of schools' internal policies. However, the Covid-19 restrictions prevented the researchers from conducting observations during data collection. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted online, and a stimulus material was developed to enhance data gathering due to the same reason. Despite being a contribution to the literature, designing and utilizing this material was challenging due to the lack of examples in the field of education.

Another limitation of this study is the demographic constraint of data collection. The data was collected online without specific attention to school types, despite recruiting participants from a variety of schools, including academies, grammar schools, single-sex or mixed comprehensive schools, faith schools, and mainstream schools. However, their recruitment was random, and the data was not

sufficient to add value to this research. Furthermore, the outbreak of Covid-19 posed a challenge to recruiting participants as many teachers were teaching remotely, struggling with virtual teaching and personal issues related to the pandemic, which may have impacted their willingness and ability to participate in the study. Additionally, it is noteworthy that the researcher is not a practising teacher in England, and as a consequence, the recruitment process was prolonged during the Covid-19 restrictions. With the help of colleagues from the Education Department of Brunel University, the recruitment process was initiated, and it continued until teachers from all subject areas, except for Arts, were interviewed. The Arts teacher did not attend as promised.

The other limitation of this study is its inability to thoroughly examine all of the complexities and nuances involved in the moral education process in secondary schools due to the scope, scale, and time limitations of the PhD. While the study provides a starting point and insights into potential future research directions, it cannot fully capture the complexity of this topic, which can be explored from various perspectives, including those of different policy actors, school subjects, students, parents, and other pedagogical aspects.

Further Research

This research has provided a comprehensive exploration of moral education in practice. However, there are still several areas that could be studied further. Some of the potential avenues for future research are as follows:

Moral/Character Education within Specific Subjects:

Since this study centres on the role of various subject areas in moral education, it delved into them broadly. However, a more detailed investigation focusing on each subject area individually could yield a deeper comprehension of their respective roles. Such insight could aid in the development of future programs or policies for moral education. Consequently, one could elaborate on how specific subject areas contribute to the execution of moral education policies and character development. This elaboration could be realized by honing in on selected subject areas and employing diverse research methodologies.

Furthermore, while there is not a distinct focus on moral or ethical education within schools, as proposed by Wilson, McPhail, Tillson, and Hand, it is worth considering the possibility of incorporating moral reasoning or inquiry into PSHE sessions. This could potentially enhance the effectiveness of moral education practices within schools.

Enhancing Teacher Education Programs:

The effectiveness of existing teacher education programs in moral education can be assessed through a comprehensive research endeavour. This evaluation may encompass input from diverse stakeholders, including Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) providers, school leadership teams, and key individuals such as PSHE coordinators or SLTs. Additionally, the perspectives of both candidate and in-service teachers should be considered. Employing a multifaceted approach integrating research methods such as questionnaires, interviews, and observations will contribute to the augmentation and refinement of teacher training programs.

Comprehensive Understanding of Moral Education Impact:

Qualitative interviews with students and their parents or caregivers can provide valuable insights into the perception and experience of moral education policies by those directly affected. Concurrently, investigating the effects of moral education on students can inform future policy-making, ensuring the integration of students' needs and experiences into policy considerations.

National-Level Studies:

Conducting thorough national-level studies that blend qualitative and quantitative methods can facilitate an analysis of moral education practices' implementation, pinpointing regional nuances and disparities. Such studies could inform policy revisions tailored to schools' needs, particularly those of teachers and students. Additionally, these findings could inform the development of teacher education programs tailored to educators working in diverse regions across the country.

Diversity of School Types:

One could explore the nuanced implementation of moral education across diverse school types, including academies, grammar schools, single-sex or mixed comprehensive schools, faith schools, and mainstream schools, investigating the influence of institutional characteristics on moral education practices.

These targeted areas of research represent a strategic focus for future endeavours, ensuring ongoing refinement of policies and practices in moral education, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and effective educational landscape for all students.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Statement of Values in NC 1999 (DfE, 1999)

Statement of values by the National Forum for Values in Education and the Community

An extract from the preamble to the statement

- The remit of the Forum was to decide whether there are any values that are commonly agreed upon across society, not whether there are any values that should be agreed upon across society. The only authority claimed for these values is the authority of consensus.
- These values are not exhaustive. They do not, for example, include religious beliefs, principles or teachings, though these are often the source of commonly held values. The statement neither implies nor entails that these are the only values that should be taught in schools. There is no suggestion that schools should confine themselves to these values.
- Agreement on the values outlined below is compatible with disagreement on their source. Many believe that God is the ultimate source of value, and that we are accountable to God for our actions; others that values have their source only in human nature, and that we are accountable only to our consciences.

The statement of values is consistent with these and other views on the source of value.

- Agreement on these values is compatible with different interpretations and applications of them. It is for schools to decide, reflecting the range of views in the wider community, how these values should be interpreted and applied. For example, the principle 'we support the institution of marriage' may legitimately be interpreted as giving rise to positive promotion of marriage as an ideal, of the responsibilities of parenthood, and of the duty of children to respect their parents.
- The ordering of the values does not imply any priority or necessary preference. The ordering reflects the belief of many that values in the context of the self must precede the development of the other values.
- These values are so fundamental that they may appear unexceptional. Their demanding nature is demonstrated both by our collective failure consistently to live up to them, and the moral challenge which acting on them in practice entails.

Schools and teachers can have confidence that there is general agreement in society upon these values. They can therefore expect the support and encouragement of society if they base their teaching and the school ethos on these values.

The Statement of Values

The self

We value ourselves as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical growth and development.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- develop an understanding of our own characters, strengths and weaknesses
- develop self-respect and self-discipline
- clarify the meaning and purpose in our lives and decide, on the basis of this, how we believe that our lives should be lived
- make responsible use of our talents, rights and opportunities
- strive, throughout life, for knowledge, wisdom and understanding
- take responsibility, within our capabilities, for our own lives.

Relationships

We value others for themselves, not only for what they have or what they can do for us. We value relationships as fundamental to the development and fulfilment of ourselves and others, and to the good of the community.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- respect others, including children
- care for others and exercise goodwill in our dealings with them
- show others they are valued
- earn loyalty, trust and confidence
- work cooperatively with others
- respect the privacy and property of others
- resolve disputes peacefully.

Society

We value truth, freedom, justice, human rights, the rule of law and collective effort for the common good. In particular, we value families as sources of love and support for all their members, and as the basis of a society in which people care for others.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- understand and carry out our responsibilities as citizens

- refuse to support values or actions that may be harmful to individuals

or communities

- support families in raising children and caring for dependants
- support the institution of marriage
- recognise that the love and commitment required for a secure and happy childhood can also be found in families of different kinds
- help people to know about the law and legal processes
- respect the rule of law and encourage others to do so
- respect religious and cultural diversity
- promote opportunities for all
- support those who cannot, by themselves, sustain a dignified life-style
- promote participation in the democratic process by all sectors of the community
- contribute to, as well as benefit fairly from, economic and cultural resources
- make truth, integrity, honesty and goodwill priorities in public and private life.

The environment

We value the environment, both natural and shaped by humanity, as the basis of life and a source of wonder and inspiration.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- accept our responsibility to maintain a sustainable environment
for future generations
- understand the place of human beings within nature
- understand our responsibilities for other species
- ensure that development can be justified
- preserve balance and diversity in nature wherever possible
- preserve areas of beauty and interest for future generations
- repair, wherever possible, habitats damaged by human development and other means.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Basic information about the interview

Date:

Time:

Platform used for the interview:

Name of interviewer:

Name of participant:

Level of teaching: Primary/secondary

Type of school:

Subject area:

Year of experience:

Ethnicity:

Gender:

Age:

Faith:

INTRODUCTION

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for accepting to take part in this research.

My name is Zikra, and I am a doctoral researcher in Education at Brunel University London.

In this research, I will focus on our understanding of different representations of moral education in government policy and your perception of your role and contribution to moral education in schools in England.

This research seeks to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences related to moral education from across a variety of curriculum subjects and will;

- Explore how teachers (from different subject areas) see their responsibilities in relation to moral education.
- Explore how teachers from different subject areas apply moral education in practice.
- Appreciate teachers' suggestions to improve the moral development of the children in primary and secondary schools in England.

This interview will approximately take 30-45 mins. You will have the option to withdraw at any point if you do not wish to continue. Your name and details will be kept confidential, and your anonymity maintained throughout the data gathering and in the publication of the outcome of this research in my thesis. I will record your voice during the interview, but we can pause or stop the recording at any time.

OPENING QUESTION

- *What does moral education mean to you?*
- *So can you tell me the characteristics of a morally developed person for you?*
- *Do you think you have a responsibility for teaching moral education as a form tutor and/or subject teacher in your practice?*

Potential Follow-ups;

- What kind of responsibility do you think you have in terms of children's moral development?
- Do you have an obligation to teach moral education; Is it part of your subject curriculum?

Content questions

- *How do you understand the government's expectations and requirements for schools and subject teachers in relation to moral education?*
- *How familiar are you with Spiritual Moral Social Cultural Education, Personal Social Health Education, Fundamental British Values (FBV), Citizenship Education, Relationships and Sex Education?*

Sharing the stimulus material here;

Link: <https://prezi.com/view/7YhbWP3WpazihF5rWyPe/>

- *Do you teach any of these in your practice?*

Potential Follow-ups:

- Could you please give some details about them
- which of those are you teaching; why?
- how do you teach them in terms of methods, materials and activities?
- *What appears to be left out of these policy documents, if any? (or ask like; where is stuff that you see as a priority that is not captured by policy which in fact policy might even contest and challenge)*
- *What is your perception of your school ethos? (What is your school ethos?)*

Potential Follow-ups:

- Do you think you have a responsibility to teach your schools ethos?
- How do you teach moral education within the school setting?
- Do you deliver or utilise the kind of material provided or dictated to you? (may ask; Do you deliver the power pointy type of lessons that head of the year gives you as a form tutor?)
- How comfortable are you to use your own material?
- How far do you go in terms of the resources and the materials you use, if you use any other than your school provided?
 - *Which subject area do you think more responsible to teach moral education? Why?*
 - *How do you feel about teaching moral education? (How confident are you?)*

 - *What are the difficulties and/or opportunities arise for you in teaching moral education?*
 - *Have you had any specific professional development in moral education?*
 - *Do you think you would benefit from further professional development in moral education? and what might this further professional development look like to you to meet your needs?*

 - *Was moral education part of your Initial Teacher Education/Training programme?*

Potential Follow-ups:

If yes;

- What was it included?
- Do you think it prepared you well to be able to embed moral education in your practice?

If no;

- What kind of programme/course would it be beneficial for your needs?
 - *How do you think you have developed your understanding of moral education?*
 - *Is there any further information that you would like to share that we have not covered?*

CLOSING INSTRUCTIONS

This interview ends here. Thank you for your time and responses. Your records will be kept confidential, and if you want to withdraw you can do so until 31st October 2021.

- Are you happy to have a look at your interview transcript and make changes if you wish so? If yes, I will email you once I finished the transcription.
- Would you like to hear about the results of the project? If so, I can share the abstract or summary once the project completed.

Appendix 3: Themes Emerged and Sample Coding

- 1. How do teachers understand the concepts of moral education regardless of and regarding to moral education policies.**

Regardless of policies:

Teaching Christian values / morals
Development of autonomy / moral reasoning
Teaching shared / community values
Character building

Regarding to policies: SMSC, PSHE, Citizenship, RHSE, British values, Character education, School Ethos

- 2. How do teachers understand their roles and responsibilities as professionals and what are their education experiences?**

Understanding their role:
Being role models
Creating (safe) space for moral discussions
Challenging students' opinions
Helping students explore different perspectives.

Teachers' education:

ITE: lack of training/ no space for moral discussions/ some training regarding to related policies/need practical training.

CPD: lack of training/ only updates or instructions regarding policies/ further training needed about expectations, model lessons and moral discussions.

- 3. Role of subject areas**

Moral/civic/intellectual/performance virtues within subject areas: RE and humanities= moral & civic, English=moral (+cultural) & performance, PE=performance, Maths & science=intellectual

Caught/taught/sought aspects: school ethos and extracurricular activities are of importance for caught and sought aspects, and subject areas support taught aspect.

Sample Coding on NVivo:

moral.ed.research.nvp - NVivo 12 Plus

File Home Import Create Explore Share

Paste Cut Copy Merge Clipboard Properties Open Memo Link Item Add To Set Create As Code Create As Cases Query Visualize Code Auto Code Range Code Uncode Case Classification Class: Classification

Nodes Search Pr

Name	Files	References	Created On
Q.1. What does moral education mean to you~		18	18 19/04/2021 00:10
1. helping children learn about right and wrong		9	13 29/09/2021 19:29
2. shaping pupils understanding of virtues and morality		6	7 29/09/2021 19:51
3. building character		6	8 29/09/2021 19:56
4. helping children to make informed decisions		7	14 29/09/2021 19:29
5. passing on the values of the society		5	5 29/09/2021 19:39
6. What they learn through RE and PSHE, and school		8	9 29/09/2021 19:36
7. contributing wider society		4	4 29/09/2021 19:28
an opportunity to speak out		1	1 29/09/2021 19:53
being transparent with students and parents		1	1 29/09/2021 20:06
challenging and broadening pupils from what they receive at home		2	2 29/09/2021 19:53
exploring key values and different worldviews		2	2 29/09/2021 19:56
FBV		1	1 29/09/2021 20:10
following government guidelines		1	1 29/09/2021 20:09
make the world a better place		1	1 29/09/2021 20:03
never heard moral edu		1	1 30/03/2022 19:47
preparing pupils for the future responsible adults		1	1 29/09/2021 20:12
setting good examples		1	1 29/09/2021 19:27
teaching children about the expected behaviours, attitudes towards ot		1	1 29/09/2021 19:33

Folders

Appendix 4: Email for Potential Participants

Dear Teachers,

I am currently undertaking a research study aimed at increasing my comprehension of how moral education and associated policies are perceived and experienced by secondary school teachers from across the curriculum. Given your role as educators, your personal viewpoint and experiences are of immense value to me.

To this end, I am requesting your participation in an online/telephone interview that should take approximately 30 minutes. The objective of the interview is to capture your thoughts and perspectives on the provision of moral education, and your responses to the questions will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. To ensure anonymity during the analysis and write-up of the findings, each interview will be assigned a number code rather than personal identifiers.

While there is no compensation for participation in this study, your contribution would be greatly appreciated and could potentially lead to a greater understanding of moral education within the public sphere. If you are willing to participate, kindly suggest a suitable day and time, and I will do my best to accommodate your schedule.

If you have any inquiries, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Mukaddes Zikra Tanriverdi Gokceli

Doctoral researcher

College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences

E mukaddeszikra.tanriverdigokceli@brunel.ac.uk

Department of Education

Brunel University London

Brunel University London, Uxbridge, UB8 3PH, United Kingdom

Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet

Study title

An Investigation of Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Moral Education In Primary And Secondary Schools In England

Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to take part in this research subject as an interviewee. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being performed and what it will cover. Please take time to read the following information carefully this information sheet will try and answer any questions you might have about the project.

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher if there is anything else you would like to know.

What is the purpose of the study?

This research aims to explore teachers' perspectives and experiences of moral education, whether they think they have a responsibility to teach moral education in their schools and their subject areas across curriculum. Also, I would like to find out that what kind of contributions every subject area can make in terms of moral development of the children in primary and secondary schools in England.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a Primary or Secondary School Teacher in an English school.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you whether you choose to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you do not want to take part in or withdraw your participation at any point, you are free to withdraw at any point up until 31st October 2021 without giving any reason. We hope that if you do choose to be involved then you will find it a valuable experience.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to be involved in an online interview of approx. 30 minutes, which will be recorded (audio only).

Are there any lifestyle restrictions?

There are not any lifestyle restrictions.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no anticipated disadvantages or possible risk associated with taking part in this study. Taking part in the study is free, however your time will be taken.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Your participation will be a great help for this research. All and any relative information will help to build a picture of moral education in practice in English schools.

What if something goes wrong?

You can contact the Chair of the Brunel Research Ethics Committee (see details provided at the end of this document) if you wish to complain about your participation experience.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All personal information received about you for this research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you will be removed while sharing with third parties. With your permission, anonymised data will be stored and may be used in future research – you can indicate whether or not you give permission for this by way of the Consent Form.

Your participation is very appreciated. Research data will always be kept secure. The data will be stored in a password protected Brunel network drive or locked file. After the interview the transcription will be sent and if you want to add or change something in it, please feel free to do so. You can withdraw it up until the project finishing date.

Data gathered by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity. The research will be kept securely in electronic form for a year.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recording be used?

All the interviews will be audio recorded (by mobile phone or other device). These recordings will be kept in absolute confidence as stated above.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The data collected for this study will be used only for academic purposes. Only the researcher will have access to participant information and results. At the end of the research process, if you wish the results will be shared with participants via email. You will not be identified in any report or publication unless you specifically request it.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This study is being organised by Mrs Mukaddes Zikra Tanriverdi Gokceli who is a doctoral researcher in the Department of Education in College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences (CBASS) at Brunel University London.

What are the indemnity arrangements?

Brunel University London provides appropriate insurance cover for research which has received ethical approval.

Who has reviewed the study?

The Research Ethics Committee (BREO), Brunel University London, has approved the research.

Research Integrity

Brunel University London is committed to compliance with the Universities UK [Research Integrity Concordat](#). You are entitled to expect the highest level of integrity from the researchers during the course of this research

Contact for further information and complaints

If you need any further information about the research, you can easily contact the researcher by email. If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, you should contact the Chair of the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee - Professor David Gallear (David.Gallear@brunel.ac.uk).

Researcher name and details:

Mukaddes Zikra TANRIVERDI GOKCELI (mukaddeszikra.tanriverdigokceli@brunel.ac.uk)

Supervisor name and details:

David Aldridge (David.Aldridge@brunel.ac.uk)

Cathy Gower (Cathy.Gower@brunel.ac.uk)

For complaints, Chair of the Research Ethics Committee:

University Research Ethics Committee

Chair – Dr Derek Healy (Derek.Healy@brunel.ac.uk)

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Date: 30/09/2020

Appendix 6: Consent Form

AN INVESTIGATION OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF MORAL EDUCATION IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

Mukaddes Zikra TANRIVERDI GOKCELI

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN
10/10/2020 AND 31/10/2021

The participant (or their legal representative) should complete the whole of this sheet.		
	YES	NO
Have you read the Participant Information Sheet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning this study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are free to withdraw from this study at any time 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You don't have to give any reason for withdrawing 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing not to participate or withdrawing will not affect your rights? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can withdraw your data any time up to 31/10/2021 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to my interview being audio recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to the use of non-attributable quotes when the study is written up or published	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The procedures regarding confidentiality have been explained to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that my anonymised data can be stored and shared with other researchers for use in future projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in this study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of research participant:	
Print name:	Date:

Although you may choose not to share, it would be worth having the following details about you to explore different dimensions about the subject. Please fill this area if you feel happy to share your;

Gender:

Ethnicity:

Faith:

Age:

Level of teaching: Primary/secondary

Type of school:

Subject area:

Year of experience:

Appendix 7: Ethics Approval Letter



College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Brunel University London
Kingston Lane
Uxbridge
UB8 3PH
United Kingdom
www.brunel.ac.uk

5 October 2020

CONDITIONAL LETTER OF APPROVAL

NB you do not need to re-submit your application

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 10/10/2020 AND 31/12/2020

Applicant (s): Mrs MUKADDES ZIKRA TANRIVERDI GOKCELI

Project Title: An investigation of teachers' perceptions and experiences of moral education in primary and secondary schools in England

Reference: 25341-LR-Oct/2020- 28054-2

Dear Mrs MUKADDES ZIKRA TANRIVERDI GOKCELI

The Research Ethics Committee has considered the above application recently submitted by you.

The Chair, acting under delegated authority has agreed that there is no objection on ethical grounds to the proposed study. Approval is given on the understanding that the conditions of approval set out below are followed:

- Participant Information Sheet: As requested in your Request for Changes Letter, under Who has reviewed the study? you give the name of your Supervisor and the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.
- **Approval is given for remote (online/telephone) research activity only. Face-to-face activity and/or travel will require approval by way of an amendment.**
- **The agreed protocol must be followed. Any changes to the protocol will require prior approval from the Committee by way of an application for an amendment.**
- In addition to the above, please ensure that you monitor and adhere to all up-to-date Government health advice for the duration of your project.

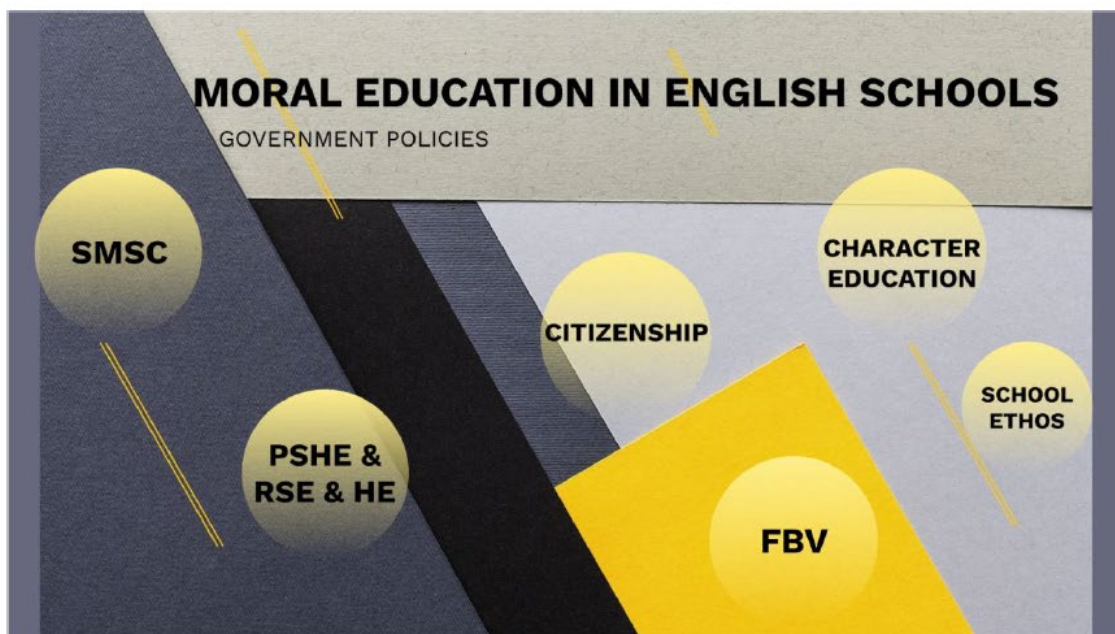
Please note that:

- Research Participant Information Sheets and (where relevant) flyers, posters, and consent forms should include a clear statement that research ethics approval has been obtained from the relevant Research Ethics Committee.
- The Research Participant Information Sheets should include a clear statement that queries should be directed, in the first instance, to the Supervisor (where relevant), or the researcher. Complaints, on the other hand, should be directed, in the first instance, to the Chair of the relevant Research Ethics Committee.
- Approval to proceed with the study is granted subject to receipt by the Committee of satisfactory responses to any conditions that may appear above, in addition to any subsequent changes to the protocol.
- The Research Ethics Committee reserves the right to sample and review documentation, including raw data, relevant to the study.
- You may not undertake any research activity if you are not a registered student of Brunel University or if you cease to become registered, including abeyance or temporary withdrawal. As a deregistered student you would not be insured to undertake research activity. Research activity includes the recruitment of participants, undertaking consent procedures and collection of data. Breach of this requirement constitutes research misconduct and is a disciplinary offence.

Professor David Gallear

Chair of the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 8: Stimulus Material



SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL (SMSC) EDUCATION

In 1992, SMSC became part of OFSTED school inspections.

SPIRITUAL
Explore beliefs and experience; respect faiths, feelings and values; enjoy learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world; use imagination and creativity; reflect.

MORAL
Recognise right and wrong; respect the law; understand consequences; investigate moral and ethical issues; offer reasoned views.

SOCIAL
Use a range of social skills; participate in the local community; appreciate diverse viewpoints; participate, volunteer and cooperate; resolve conflict; engage with the 'British values' of democracy, the rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance.

CULTURAL
Appreciate cultural influences; appreciate the role of Britain's parliamentary system; participate in culture opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity.

<http://www.doingsmsc.org.uk/>

PERSONAL SOCIAL HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) & RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) AND HEALTH EDUCATION

***PSHE is not compulsory, but suggested**

*** RSE will be mandatory from September 2020. Schools are encouraged to adopt the new curriculum early from September 2019.**

PSHE

RSE

PERSONAL SOCIAL HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

PSHE education is a school subject through which pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe, and prepared for life and work.

Health Education

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION, RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE), HEALTH EDUCATION

The subjects are part of the basic school curriculum, as previously for sex education in maintained secondary schools, which allows schools flexibility in developing their planned programme, integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum.

Relationships Education

Relationships and Sex education

See the points what the guidance applies to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Relationships education;

- Compulsory for all schools providing primary education, including all-through schools and middle schools, includes schools as set out in the Summary section of the guidance.
- 'The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.'

Relationships and sex education;

All schools providing secondary education, including all-through schools and middle schools, includes schools as set out in the Summary section of the guidance.

'The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.'

Physical health and mental wellbeing ;

All maintained schools including schools with a sixth form, academies, free schools, non-maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.

'The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It should enable them to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others and, when issues arise, know how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources.'

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Citizenship teaching provides '**knowledge, skills and understanding**' to '**play a full and active part in society**' (National Curriculum 2014).

The citizenship curriculum fosters:

- keen awareness and understanding of **democracy, government and law**
- skills and knowledge to **explore political and social issues critically**
- skills and knowledge to weigh evidence, debate and **make reasoned arguments**
- pupils' ability '**to take their place in society as responsible citizens**'.

FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES

In 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) published a guidance on promoting Fundamental British values (FBV) as part of SMSC in schools to prepare the young students for modern life of Britain, which includes the values of ;

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

Character Education

Non-statutory guidance to schools on character education and development for pupils was published in November 2019.

WHAT IS CHARACTER?

'Character is a complex concept with a number of overlapping facets. We identified four important aspects, which can inform the way schools shape their wider provision for children and young people:

- the ability to remain motivated by long-term goals, to see a link between effort in the present and pay-off in the longer-term, overcoming and persevering through, and learning from, setbacks when encountered;
- the learning and habituation of positive moral attributes, sometimes known as 'virtues', and including, for example, courage, honesty, generosity, integrity, humility and a sense of justice, alongside others;
- the acquisition of social confidence and the ability to make points or arguments clearly and constructively, listen attentively to the views of others, behave with courtesy and good manners and speak persuasively to an audience; and
- an appreciation of the importance of long-term commitments which frame the successful and fulfilled life, for example to spouse, partner, role or vocation, the local community, to faith or world view. This helps individuals to put down deep roots and gives stability and longevity to lifetime endeavours.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/character-education-framework>

SCHOOL ETHOS

- * Depends on the school
- * Can also be called as the values of the schools

What is your school's ethos?

Appendix 9: Participants' Demographics

PEOPLE	AGE	ETHNICITY	FAITH	GENDER	ROLE	SCHOOL TYPE	SUBJECT AREAS 1	SUBJECT AREAS 2	YEAR OF EXPERIENCE
1 LAILA	31-40	NORTH AFRICAN	MUSLIM	FEMALE	TEACHER	MAINSTREAM	MFL	Not Applicable	6-10
2 ROBERT	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	CATHOLIC	MALE	HEAD OF SCHOOL	CATHOLIC ACADEMY	PE	Not Applicable	21+
3 ADAM	31-40	WHITE BRITISH	Not Applicable	MALE	TEACHER	MIXED COMPREHENSIVE	PSYCHOLOGY	PE	11-15
4 LEENA	51-60	Not Applicable	MUSLIM	FEMALE	TEACHER	MAINSTREAM	SCIENCE	Not Applicable	16-20
5 DAVID	41-50	WHITE BRITISH	ATHEIST/NONE	MALE	HEAD OF DEPARTMENT	GRAMMAR	GEOGRAPHY	RE/RS	11-15
6 MARIAM	31-40	NORTH AFRICAN	MUSLIM	FEMALE	TEACHER	COMPREHENSIVE GIRLS SCHOOL	PSYCHOLOGY	Not Applicable	11-15
7 RITA	25-30	WHITE	CHRISTIAN	FEMALE	TEACHER	MAINSTREAM	MFL	Not Applicable	0-5
8 AHMAD	31-40	BLACK AFRICAN	MUSLIM	MALE	TEACHER	MAINSTREAM	ICT/COMPUTING	Not Applicable	0-5
9 DENIS	60+	MIDDLE EASTERN	MUSLIM	MALE	TEACHER	MIXED COMPREHENSIVE	MATHS	Not Applicable	21+
10 JANE	Not Applicable	MIDDLE EASTERN	MUSLIM	FEMALE	TEACHER	MAINSTREAM	MATHS	ECONOMICS	0-5
11 CHRIS	41-50	WHITE	Not Applicable	MALE	TEACHER	MAINSTREAM	MFL	Not Applicable	0-5
12 SERA	51-60	WHITE BRITISH	CHRISTIAN	FEMALE	TEACHER	GRAMMAR	GEOGRAPHY	Not Applicable	21+
13 JULIA	51-60	WHITE BRITISH	ATHEIST/NONE	FEMALE	TEACHER	GRAMMAR	PE	Not Applicable	21+
14 MICHAEL	31-40	IRISH	CATHOLIC	MALE	TEACHER	GRAMMAR	MFL	RE/RS	6-10
15 MATTHEW	41-50	WHITE	CHRISTIAN	MALE	ASSISTANT HEAD TEACHER	ACADEMY	PE	Not Applicable	16-20
16 MARTIN	41-50	WHITE BRITISH	CHRISTIAN	MALE	DEPUTY HEAD	CHURCH OF ENGLAND	RE/RS	Not Applicable	6-10
17 KATE	25-30	WHITE BRITISH	CHRISTIAN	FEMALE	TEACHER	CHURCH OF ENGLAND	ENGLISH	Not Applicable	0-5
18 JENNIFER	25-30	WHITE BRITISH	Not Applicable	FEMALE	TEACHER	ACADEMY	HISTORY	RE/RS	0-5

Appendix 10: Sample Transcript

Basic information about the interview

Date: 26/10/2020

Time: 3:30pm

Platform used for the interview: Zoom

Name of interviewer: Zikra

Name of participant: Laila

Level of teaching: secondary

Type of school: Community

Subject area: Languages (MFL)

Year of experience: 9

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: North African

Age: 40

Faith: Muslim

- *What does moral education mean to you?*

Not much. To be honest with you. I think it is just like, I do not know, setting good examples for children making sure they become good human beings. besides of course academic success of our students we want them to become good people so I think it is all the values we pass on to them you know to be good numbers of the society.

-ok

- *What are the character strengths of a morally developed person for you?*

I think the first one for me is kindness. Because of the experiences I have had with children I know kids can be very cruel to each other at least. So I think kindness is really something we should emphasise on.

Caring as well, you know. Being mindful of our peers. Often, they are don't in the schools. I think they don't have like time they don't have the the kind of access to really know if somebody is feeling well or things are not going right for person, student. So really if you teach the kids to care each other you know they could bring something more tragic happens.

So what did I say kindness, caring, sharing as well. It is something very important

I think also the open-mindedness about you know people from different from, students who are different you know

- what do you mean by difference?

Just different in terms of their characteristics in general. So being openminded towards people from different backgrounds, different class, different genders, different all these characteristics I would say. So really like openminded, being accepting others I would say.

I think the last one would be respectful. Respectful of you know of others and all their cultures, values, way of life and yeah being respectful. I think that is very important too.

- okay, thank you.

- *Do you think you have a responsibility for teaching moral education as a form tutor and/or subject teacher in your practice?*

I think both. I think once you are an educator you are here to set an example. SO you are here to be a mentor for the students. I think once you work with young people yo have to be able to embed moral education into children's way of life and you know into children's mentality. I think we all have a crucial role in providing moral education.

- What kind of responsibility do you think you have in terms of children's moral development?

I am not sure but as a form tutor at least I know we have during our PSHE session which is very powerful to teach I think most of the moral education to our students. But I am responsible in delivering those sessions as a form tutor. Now, am I responsible to make sure that they required this moral education. I am not sure. I don't know.

- Do you have an obligation to teach moral education; Is it part of your subject curriculum?

Well, to be honest with you I don't think so. I think we have to. Yes, moral education in the sense that the education we provide to our students must be free of political views, free of extreme views, or free of any kind of you know it must be politicized. If I may use this word. So in this sense we teach objectively as not to influence our children's opinions and things like that. So they are able to make their own minds I would say. As a part of the real curriculum MFL no I don't have nothing really specifically in mind. I think the fact that we teach for example some cultural contend and we teach about falco countries for example French so we will have to talk about the Canadian culture or the sub-saharian culture. Because these countries are falco France countries and in that sense we need to teach that impartially free of I would say of judgements kind of thing. If I make sense

- Okay, yeah.
- *How do you understand the government's expectations and requirements for schools and subject teachers in relation to moral education?*

Hmm, that is embarrassing I am not aware of any governmental policy. But we have PSHE in delivering moral education. Sorry.

- Okay can you please open the material that I shared with you.
-
- *How familiar are you with Spiritual Moral Social Cultural Education, Personal Social Health Education, Fundamental British Values (FBV), Citizenship Education, Relationships and Sex Education?*
- SMSC

AA yeah

- PSHE

A yeah, we do that.

- Citizenship

Yes, it is to be subject core subject on time table but it is been scrapped of I think.

- in your school?

I think in all schools. We don't teach citizenship as standalone subject. It is now embedded in PSHE in form time.

- Relationship and sex education

Yes, we do have that in PSHE as well here.

- *Do you teach any of these in your practice?*

Yes of course we do. I believe we do.

- Could you please give some details about them. For example, which of those are you teaching; why?

Okay are you talking about the form tutor time or in my subject area?

- Both.

Okay. I would say in my subject area the cultural thing, it is very much present. Because we teach languages. So we do explore cultures of, you know, different countries and we do some kind of like studies of different people, different languages and so on. I think that is all I can think of in terms of my own subject area.

But as a form tutor of course we have. I mean as a school in general for example the social bit. We do participate in the local community so sometimes we do collect for certain charity. I remember last year we did a green walk, what we called a green walk, where we went to pick up litters around the area, residential area around the school. So that was really fun. We have some external agencies who come and do some kind of interventions with the school in order to guide young people and keep

them out of the street and of the... so on. I have got too many examples to share with you to be honest.

- yeah, you can please. In terms of your methods, materials and activities, you can give examples please.

In terms of spiritual, we do not do anything religious in our school. What we do though is celebrate community celebrations. For example, Eid, or Diwali which is you know community organised kind of event that will happen within the school. And we would invite the community regardless of you know whether they celebrate Diwali or not. everybody is more than welcome to attend those events which obviously it's now a weird time because of the coronavirus issue, we have crisis. We have not had anything going on since January last year. We haven't had any big gathering or any intervention from the wider community in the school. So that has stopped in that respect so probably gonna see the impact of that in few months, you know.

umm. British values, it's also, I would say it's a particular session that we need to deliver through our form class about FBV. Which is again, you know, all about tolerance, being respectful of the others and all these things. Yeah.

- Do you have other activities, assemblies for example?

Yes, assemblies I believe they do share that in assemblies. For example, when we had... for example for covid-19. So we had a few assemblies about covid-19 and we were trying to raise really awareness among the children you know on how important it is to keep the distance, and the face and the hands, you know, all these things. and saying to them its so important because some students may have elderly people at home, grandparents or maybe a newborn and that would put in their lives at risk so we have to be mindful of the others. And if we do these steps, its not just to protect ourselves, but its also, and most importantly, to protect others. These how, you know, selfless we are, is the thing if we are talking about the present situation. But assemblies about british values, yes, we have had assemblies last year about cultural capital as well, a concept that I do not really agree with to be honest with you, but it was something the school deem to be important to pass on to children. So that happened. Aaa. Cultural capital was embedded in so many events to, how to say, to enhance, to value more British Culture. That was my personal opinion to be honest with you. But may be I am wrong. Yeah.

- *What appears to be left out of these policy documents, if any? (or ask like; where is stuff that you see as a priority that is not captured by policy which in fact policy might even contest and challenge)*

To be honest with you, I would definitely need to scrutinize it and therefore we'll need much more time than you've given me already, but, umm, what appears to be missing. I mean, there's a lot of information, which I am not able to, uh, digest all at the same time.

-I'm just asking the ones that you know.

I could not say, I think it is quite complete.

- Okay then.
- *What is your perception of your school ethos? (What is your school ethos?)*

Uh, my school ethos is; aspire commit and succeed. Okay. Those are the three words that we use, because if you aspire to be, uh, somebody, uh, I mean something, you know, uh, and you commit to it, you will definitely succeed. So this is, and this happened, I mean, we had a different ethos back when I started in that school. And that, that ethos is kind of new. I would say. It's not a very old ethos. They just, you know, came up with it, uh, uh, I think two to three years ago. And, uh, and you can see really that ethos that academic achievements is, uh, that is, um, you know, most important than anything. So, yeah, that's our school ethos I don't think you could allow me to speak about the old school, which was much more moral and it was, uh, uh, what was it, uh, sharing is caring, something like that?

No, no, no, no. I is not that. That was an English expression. It was, uh, uh, um, I used to know it by heart. You see, um, it was, uh, at, uh, in our school, Uh, we care for each of, uh, we share with each other and we care for each other or something like that. It was something about caring and sharing. So it was more about the, uh, humanity, you know, in, it said the school really, um, you know, brought up this kind of humanism within the school because we are a community school and, and compared to, you know, the new ethos, which is very much academic driven. Now, there is something that I want to tell you. I don't know if I'm talking too much, you tell me though. Uh, but, um, like my, the old, under the old head teacher, so we had these kind of humanistic Ethos, and she was a language teacher initially, and now we have these very academic, you know, like success driven ethos. And the head teacher is about his background is a science teacher. So I, I think it does, you know, the ethos has changed according to, uh, to, to, you know, it has just to feed the, um, I would say the mentality or the morality of the head teachers in charge, right?

- Do you think you have a responsibility to teach your schools ethos?

Absolutely, absolutely.

- How do you teach moral education within the school setting?

Oh, well we just remind them all the time, you know, aspire commit, you know, and we have the four Rs, they are, you know, it's four words that we have underneath our school ethos. So the school ethos is, uh, aspire, commit and succeed. And then the four R is ready respectful, resilient, shame on me. I forgot the fourth one, uh, respectful, ready, resilient... And, uh, that's embarrassing again, uh, respectful, really resilient, but I dunno...

-Okay you can tell me later whenever you find out.

Yeah. Uh, you know what I can find out right now, so, uh, do not move. So the, for us, the R I don't read respect for resilient. How can I have forgotten that this is, uh, uh, resilience and, Oh, come on. It's not giving it to me now. Come on. Give it to me. Hold on. 4 Rs. No, it's not coming up to a, to, to me now, but, ummm...

Oh yeah. Vision values and admission. Okay. So, uh, I'm on my school website now. About us, blah, blah, blah. Oh, yeah. Ready respectful, responsible. That's the one I forgot and resilience. Yeah. These are the four. So yeah, underneath you like the school ethos, which is, uh, you know, aspire, comit and succeed. We have these four Rs, which we have to remind students all the time.

Oh yeah. So for example, the students would put their hand up and say, Oh, miss, I don't have a pen, you know, and you would have to remind them, but you forgot about the four Rs, you know, so ready. It's, you know, one of the Rs when you have to be ready and have you all your school materials, like uniform has to be, you know, proper, you have to have all your books and things like that. So you are not fulfilling one of the Rs. And if you're not fulfilling all of the RS, you know, at the same time, then you know, we're going to have a problem. So yes, we do have, uh, uh, the responsibility to, you know, remind them all the time by them and therefore teaching them.

-And, and how, how are you teaching this in your school setting? Like, do you have any activities or like any stuff on your roles, for example...

No, as form tutors and as teachers, uh, you know, Reminding them, uh, every now and then. I mean, As often as possible at least. That they need to admit by those for Rs. Um, I, I don't see what else we do. I mean, it's reminded doing assemblies and it's reminded during, you know, many, many of the events, uh, in the school. So, I mean, it's reminded all the time, even in the canteen at break time or lunchtime, you know, I can hear like, you know, Mondays on duty, uh, at this point where if they are messing around, they're going to have to remind them the four Rs, because one of them is respectful for example. And for example, a student has, you know, been very nice to another. So we remind them again, the four Rs. I mean, I think every opportunity is good too. Um, just remind them of the value of these, uh, these four words, the value it has for the school and the value that, and how it is important to, to, to, to admit by them.

- Do you deliver or utilise the kind of material provided or dictated to you? (may ask; Do you deliver the power pointy type of lessons that head of the year gives you as a form tutor?)

I, to be honest with you, I'm not that, uh, I do not take upon myself the responsibility to produce materials in a subject area. I mean, in the field or in an area, I would say that I'm not comfortable with, so yes, we are provided with all the materials we need when we deliver sessions lined up. Yes.

- How comfortable are you to deliver those materials instead of yours'?

Um, well, instead of mine, I wouldn't say that because I don't have any, but I am very comfortable using, uh, using their, their materials. Everything is really, I mean, we have a lady who is in charge of, um, of the PSHE program, uh, of the whole year. So, um, I've never had any problem with her presentations. They've always been very clear, very easy to explain, very, uh, even a very entertaining to be honest with you like, uh, this month, for example, is black history month and she's produced some wonderful resources, uh, for our students to, um, you know, to, to, to, for our students to, you know, celebrate black history month. And I think all of them even though I'm not, you know, like an expert in the field. I was really able to deliver the, the, the sessions. No problem. Do a really clear, concise, and then, and easy to understand. Well, obviously they're made for children.

- Are they kind of powerpointy...

It is. Always in the form of powerpoint. Yeah.

- *Which subject area do you think more responsible to teach moral education? Why?*

Okay. I believe it's everybody's responsibility. Not just a I'm sure. People would say like RS, you know, teachers like religious study teachers, or they would say you're, you know, more kind of literary subject. I would, I would say. But no, I think it's everybody's role to, uh, to, to teach moral education. And if it is not to teach, it is really like an attitude that everybody has to adopt so that we can pass this onto the kids and the kids will copy good behaviour, Will copy good manners, Will copy, ou know, good, good morality.

- *How do you feel about teaching moral education? (How confident are you?)*

Well, to be honest with you, I, uh, well, I'm not that confident because again, you know, this is not my field and I'm not, you know, I'm not, I don't have any pastoral role in the school, but, uh, I think if we have a good and well-designed materials, I think anybody can do it because I believe that any educator has some kind of, uh, you know, uh, like would not, not like any educator, anybody who goes into, you know, educating young people, we do have, I would say your special, um, uh, I would say, like, we, we give more importance to, you know, the morals and the good, because this is what you have to pass on more than any other, you know, job really, because it is our job to, to make sure those kids are becoming good, good people.

- *What are the difficulties and/ or opportunities arise for you in teaching moral education?*

I think the main advantage for teaching moral education is that we teachers are learning at the same time. Our PSHE sessions are so rich and varied that we often come across an unknown field which is very interesting as we learn new things. the difficulties would be subjects that we are not comfortable talking about such as sexual education especially with the older kids, I find it a bit awkward.

- *Have you had any specific professional development in moral education?*

Uh, professional development in moral education? Uh, not, uh, not exactly. Uh, like you saying it, but we've had, uh, we've had a PD about, uh, cultural capital and, uh, so we've had that last year and, um, we've had PD of course, two or three years ago. I can remember you and exactly about, uh, British values. Uh, so yeah. Yeah, I think we've had, yeah, we've had two PDs about it. Yes.

- *Do you think you would benefit from further professional development in moral education?*

Uh, maybe, but I am certainly not going to sign up voluntarily, I would say yes.

- *And what might this further professional development look like to you to meet your needs?*

Uh, I don't know, because I really don't have an opinion on that. I don't think I need more training on it because it's not because I'm an expert in it. It's just because of the way it's being passed on is efficient enough, I think. And, uh, and, uh, you know, and that we do not need to be, uh, to have

the professional development because we won't be, uh, uh, developing the materials. Won't be, you know, making the material. So it's all, it's all being prepared by somebody who is qualified enough and I'm sure he's, you know, knowledgeable enough in moral education. she just needs really, uh, she just needs, uh, uh, people to accommodate her PowerPoint. And, uh, as teachers we can deliver PowerPoint, that is something we can do.

- *Was moral education part of your Initial Teacher Education/Training programme?*

That that was, uh, you're going, uh, way back now. Uh, let me just think morally being humanistic, I think we've had discussions, you know, um, but I don't believe we had like a proper module or anything like that, but I remember once talking with, um, I mean, we were having a conversation in the classroom really, you know, at university with our tutor. And, uh, she was saying, uh, to us that as much as, uh, you know, uh, this child, you know, has been for example, naughty or, you know, misbehaving, uh, you do not forget that this child is somebody else's Prince or princess. Um, so therefore nobody would want to, you know, be a, like harsh on them or mistreat them, I would say. So for example, and she gave us an example that we, that she said for example if somebody misbehaviour, you wouldn't say, Oh, you are behaving badly, or you are bad Boy, you wouldn't describe him as a person. You would always say your behavior is bad. I don't, like, instead of saying, I don't like you, you would say, I don't like your behavior, you know, and not pointing at his person, you know, not, yeah. Not blaming his own person, but blaming rather blaming his, you know, behaviour. Attitude. Yeah.

- What kind of programme/course would it be beneficial for your needs?

I think what would interest me more is to see more intercultural, moral education. If I could call that, sorry.

- what do you mean by intercultural moral education?

Uh, just some, some kind of education that would really enable our children to fight in this, uh, you know, in the, in, in this globalized world where they will have to, uh, fortunately, uh, but they will have to mix with other people from different religions, different backgrounds, different countries, different everything, and, and being able to be very receptive and very accepting and very respectful of that. I think this is something we still have to work on, uh, in this country. I think, I work in a community school. You see? And when you walk across the, um, how you call it, the, the playground, you can see, uh, uh, the, the, the pockets of community grouping you're, you know, in every corner of the classroom. So you will often see, like, for example, the Indian kids together speaking their own language, which is absolutely fine, you know, but the, there is, and then you've got the African Caribbean in their own corner as well. And then you've got these white kids, you know, in their own corner. So there is even in school. You can see that there is a group community group forming in the playground that people are not very much like mixing with each other. I don't know if it's a good comparison but, for example, in school I never saw in the group you could have had a three, four, five, six, 10, 10 to 10 different cultures, their origins, you know, that wouldn't be a problem. But, uh, I don't know. I don't know. This is what I've seen in here.

- So don't you think the current policy covers all these, like respecting the other religions, other like ethnicities...

I'm not saying there is a problem of respecting others and all these things I'm saying there is a problem in, um, interconnecting with others. That's what I'm saying. So people are, they are happy with the others as long as they have nothing to do with them, that is, you understand, the thing. Yeah.

- Do you have any suggestion how to do this kind of moral education?

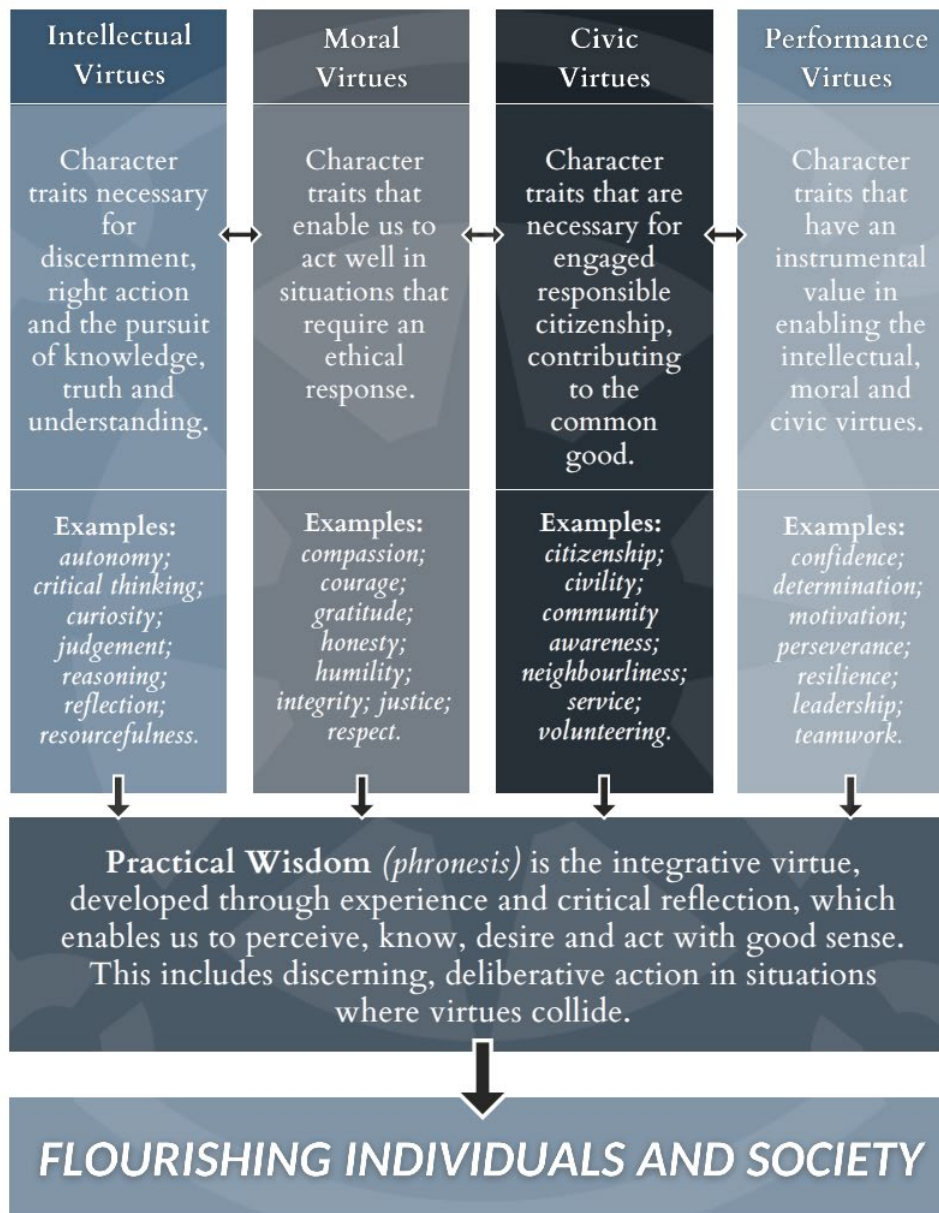
Uh, no, but I'm sure you'll find out.

- *Is there any further information that you would like to share that we have not covered?*

Uh no, not really.

Appendix 11: Four-dimensional taxonomy for Character Education in schools
(Jubilee Centre, 2022)

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHARACTER



“ Character virtues should be reinforced everywhere: on the playing fields, in classrooms, corridors, interactions between teachers and pupils, in assemblies, posters, head teacher messages and communications, staff training, and in relations with parents and families. ”

The Jubilee Centre Framework for Character Education in Schools

Appendix 12: TABLE 1: Official Documents & Requirements For teachers (Extended version)

TABLE TT: OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS & REQUIREMENTS REGARDING TO MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENTS				TERMINOLOGY
QUALIFIED TO TEACH (DfES, 2006)	<p>Professional Values and Practice: *They have high expectations of all pupils; respect their social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds; and are committed to raising their educational achievement.</p> <p>*They demonstrate and promote the positive values, attitudes, and behaviour that they expect from their pupils.</p>	<p>(Professional) Knowledge and Understanding: *They know and understand the values, aims and purposes and the general teaching requirements set out in the National curriculum handbook. As relevant to the age range they are trained to teach, they are familiar with the programme of study for citizenship and the national curriculum framework for personal, social and health Education (PSHE)</p>	<p>Professional Skills: <u>Teaching:</u> *They have high expectations of pupils and build successful relationships, centred on teaching and learning. They establish a purposeful learning environment where diversity is value and where pupils feel secure and confident. *They set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to anticipate and manage pupils' behaviour constructively and promote self-control and independence.</p>	
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS (TDA, 2007)	<p>Professional Attributes: <u>Relationship with children and young people:</u> *Have high expectations of children and young people including a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full educational potential and to establishing fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with them. *Hold positive values and attitudes and adopt high standards of behaviour in their professional role.</p>	<p>Professional Knowledge and Understanding: <u>Achievement and Diversity:</u> *Understand how children and young people develop and how the progress, rate of development and well-being of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic influences.</p>	<p>Professional Skills: <u>Learning Environment:</u> *Promote learners' self-control, independence and cooperation through developing their social, emotional and behavioural skills.</p>	<p>TERMS: Learners Colleagues Classroom Workplace Subjects/curriculum areas Lessons Parents and carers Well-being Personalised learning The term 'well-being' refers to the rights of children and young people (as set out and consulted upon in the Every Child Matters: Green Paper and subsequently set out in the Children Act 2004), in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical and mental health and emotional well-being • protection from harm and neglect • education, training, and recreation • the contribution made by them to society • social and economic well-being.
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS (TDA, 2008)	<p>Professional attributes: <u>Relationship with children and young people:</u> *Have high expectations of children and young people including a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full educational potential and to establishing fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with them. *Demonstrate the positive values, attitudes, and behaviour they expect from children and young people.</p>	<p>Professional Knowledge and Understanding: <u>Achievement and Diversity:</u> *Understand how children and young people develop and that the progress and well-being of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic influences.</p>	<p>Professional Skills: <u>Learning Environment:</u> *Establish a purposeful and safe learning environment conducive to learning and identify opportunities for learners to learn in out-of-school contexts. *Establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to manage learners' behaviour constructively and promote their self-control and independence.</p>	
TEACHERS' STANDARDS (DfE, 2011, 2021) <small>(Starts from September 2012) (INTRO UPDATED 2013) (TERMINOLOGY UPDATED 2021)</small>	<p>Personal and Professional Conduct: <u>Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:</u> *Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position *Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions *Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others *Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.</p>	<p>Teaching: <u>Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:</u> *Establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect *Set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities, and dispositions *Demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils. <u>Plan and teach well-structured lessons</u> <u>Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils:</u> *Demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development <u>Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment</u> <u>Fulfil wider professional responsibilities:</u> *Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school.</p>	<p>TERMS: Fundamental British Values Parents Pupils School Special educational needs Statutory frameworks 'Fundamental British values' is taken from the definition of extremism as articulated in the new Prevent Strategy, which was launched in June 2011. It includes 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'.</p>	

<p>ITT CORE CONTENT FRAMEWORK (DfE, 2019/6)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>EARLY CAREER FRAMEWORK (DfE, 2019/4)</p> <p>(ITTCCF requirements are listed here because these two documents are almost identical except for word changes)</p>	<p>Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:</p> <p><u>Learn that:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Teachers have the ability to affect and improve the wellbeing, motivation and behaviour of their pupils. *Teachers are key role models, who can influence the <u>attitudes, values, and behaviours</u> of their pupils. *Teacher expectations can affect pupil outcomes; setting goals that challenge and stretch pupils is essential. *Setting clear expectations can help communicate shared values that improve classroom and school culture. *A culture of <u>mutual trust and respect</u> supports effective relationships. *High-quality teaching has a long-term positive effect on pupils' life chances, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. <p>Plan and teach well-structured lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Enabling critical thinking and problem solving by first teaching the necessary foundational content knowledge. <p>Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Seeking to understand pupils' differences, including their different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning, is an essential part of teaching. <p>Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Teachers can influence pupils' resilience and beliefs about their ability to succeed, by ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to experience meaningful success. *Building effective relationships is easier when pupils believe that their feelings will be considered and understood. *Pupils are motivated by intrinsic factors (related to their identity and values) and extrinsic factors (related to reward). <p>Fulfil wider professional responsibilities:</p> <p><u>Learn that:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Effective professional development is likely to be sustained over time, involve expert support or coaching and opportunities for collaboration. *Reflective practice, supported by feedback from and observation of experienced colleagues, professional debate, and learning from educational research, is also likely to support improvement. *Teachers can make valuable contributions to the wider life of the school in a broad range of ways, including by supporting and developing effective professional relationships with colleagues. *Engaging in high-quality professional development can help teachers improve.
<p>OFSTED EDUCATION INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (DfE, 2019/5)</p> <p>(Last Updated 2022)</p>	<p>3. Personal development</p> <p>EIF grade criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The curriculum extends beyond the academic, technical, or vocational and provides for learners' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents. * The curriculum and the provider's wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy. * At each stage of education, the provider prepares learners for future success in their next steps. * The provider prepares learners for life in modern Britain by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society; - developing their understanding of fundamental British values; - developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; - celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law. <p>Character, resilience and British values such as tolerance are important characteristics, which we want to develop in children and young people. Education should help prepare learners to lead ethical, productive, and fulfilling lives and to contribute positively to society.</p> <p>NOTE: there is no direct mention of SMSC, PSHE, RSHE within this framework</p>
<p>OFSTED GUIDANCE SCHOOL INSPECTION HANDBOOK (DfE, 2022)</p>	<p>Evaluating Personal development</p> <p>293. These include how the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * ensures that curriculum subjects such as <u>citizenship, RE</u> and other areas such as <u>personal, social, health and economic education, and relationships and sex education</u>, contribute to pupils' personal development – including by considering the provision, quality and take-up of extra-curricular activities offered by the school *develops pupils to become responsible, respectful and active citizens who are able to play their part and become actively involved in public life as adults *through the curriculum, assemblies, wider opportunities, visits, discussions and literature, <u>develops and deepens pupils' understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law, and mutual respect and tolerance</u> *promotes equality of opportunity so that all pupils can thrive together, understanding that difference is a positive, not a negative, and that individual characteristics make people unique. This includes, but is not limited to, pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics and how equality and diversity are promoted *ensures an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, and where no discrimination exists, for example in respect of wider opportunities for pupils *<u>develops pupils' characters, which we define as a set of positive personal traits, dispositions and virtues that informs pupils' motivation and guides their conduct so that they reflect wisely, learn eagerly, behave with integrity and cooperate consistently well with others. This gives pupils the qualities they need to flourish in our society</u> *<u>develops pupils' confidence, resilience and knowledge so that they can keep themselves mentally healthy</u>

*enables pupils to recognise online and offline risks to their well-being – for example, risks from criminal and sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism – and making them aware of the support available to them

*enables pupils to recognise the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social media

*develops pupils' understanding of how to keep physically healthy, eat healthily and maintain an active lifestyle, including giving ample opportunities for pupils to be active during the school day and through extra-curricular activities

*develops pupils' age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships through appropriate [relationships and sex education](#)

304. On graded inspections, inspectors will focus on:

*whether the school has had due regard to the statutory guidance on **RHSE (Relationships, sex, and health education)**

*pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, citizenship education, modern British values, the development of character and wider development**

NOTE: Details of evaluation criteria for Relationships and Sex education can be found at points 296. – 298.; for Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education at points 299. – 303.