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# A Review of Moral Education and its place in Scottish Primary Education

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## Abstract

**A Review of Moral Education and its place in Scottish Primary Education**

This thesis reviews moral education from practical, theoretical and political perspectives. It is concerned with Scottish primary education where religious education and moral education are most often considered as one curricular area. The thesis argues that moral education is necessarily part of all curricular areas. Yet a review of research suggests that teachers feel uncertain about their role as moral educators.

Several philosophical approaches to moral education are reviewed. The central question to be addressed is which approach might best inform moral education within a liberal democracy where a tendency towards moral relativism is present. This leads to practical questions concerning the guidance that teachers might be given about moral education.

One practical approach to moral education which draws on virtue ethics is considered to offer an answer to that question. The approach considers that stories, TV and films offer potential for bridging a possible gap between the private world of the home and the public world of the school. Suggestions of how the approach might be implemented, what guidance might be given and how success might be determined are offered.

## Introduction

A review of moral education from practical, theoretical and political perspectives is provided in 6 chapters.

An introductory chapter outlines a current dilemma facing moral educators and raises a fundamental question of how moral education might be taken forward. Three common philosophical perspectives on morality; Aristotelian, Kantian and Consequentialist, are explained and their implications for moral education and society discussed. An analysis of the three perspectives shows that each contains unique and complex principles. It is argued that, although different, the three perspectives are not entirely distinct. Examination of the three perspectives shows that moral education is a feature of both the formal and 'hidden' curriculum. It is also argued that moral education underpins all aspects of school life and that teaching is best conceived primarily as a moral endeavour. The chapter concludes that teachers need a philosophical understanding of moral education. It is noted that this requirement holds implications for teacher education and its selection of candidates.

Chapter two discusses some features of a liberal democracy. The chapter considers how the distinction between public and private raises a central question concerning values. A liberal democratic problem is presented in that schools must aim for pupils to develop desirable moral values in a society that is not always clear about, nor always in agreement of, which values are desirable. The impact of differences between moral education in the home and in school is considered. Difficulties are highlighted in so much as home is considered a

private matter whilst schooling is viewed as a public concern. Rawls' (2005) idea of an overlapping consensus is analysed as a possible means of attending to differences in values. The chapter establishes that while agreement on desirable values might be possible, it is in putting values into practice that difficulties can re-emerge. A reinterpretation of Rawls' theory provided by Halliday (1999) is drawn upon and recommended as a practical means for schools to attempt to tackle the liberal democratic problem. The chapter suggests that there is a need for home and school to establish a common ground for tackling smaller moral issues. Popular stories, TV and films are suggested as one possible source of smaller moral issues about which people care deeply. It is proposed that through tackling these smaller moral issues school communities will subsequently begin to tackle bigger issues concerning society and humanity. It is argued that citizens need to develop moral reasoning skills to prepare them for engaging with diverse values and in tackling moral issues in a liberal democracy. The chapter concludes that moral education and pupils' experiences in schools should support this.

Chapter three provides a review of available research on teachers' perceptions of moral education and their responsibilities as moral educators. It reveals that little empirical work has been completed in this area of moral education. The research indicates that, on the whole, teachers feel that they have an obligation to act as moral role models and to morally educate their pupils. Evidence suggests that others also support the idea that schools and teachers should be responsible for the moral education of future citizens. However, there is disagreement on how moral education should be taken forward and on how

teachers should uphold their responsibilities. The review confirms that the diversity of values in liberal democracies and the distinction between public and private can present difficulties for teachers as moral educators. It is concluded that the majority of teachers are uncertain about their role as moral educators and of how to respond in moral situations, mainly out of a fear of doing the wrong thing or giving the wrong advice in the eyes of parents and management. The chapter also suggests that teachers might struggle with their role as moral educators because they do not have a strong philosophical basis for their teaching of moral education. Again, it is argued that teachers require philosophical insights to be able to confidently tackle moral issues across the curriculum and in the moral situations that can arise unexpectedly in day-to-day school life. Finally, the chapter discusses the government's role in supporting teachers as moral educator and in encouraging education as a moral endeavour. It is argued that moral education should receive more attention at all levels.

Chapter four provides an analysis of Scottish policy documents relating to moral education. The chapter shows that some guidance on the issues, topics and attitudes to be explored through moral education is provided through the 5-14 RME policy document (SOED, 1992) and in '*Curriculum for Excellence*' (Scottish Executive, 2008). However, the analysis reveals a lack of robust guidance offered to teachers in the area of moral education. It is suggested that guidance is required on possible approaches to teaching moral education throughout the curriculum and on how teachers might deal with moral issues that arise in unexpected and unstructured ways. The chapter briefly traces the

historical roots of the coupling of religious and moral education in Scottish Primary Education. It is argued that moral education and many other areas of the curriculum are closely linked, including citizenship, sex education, education for sustainability and personal and social development. The chapter proposes that greater emphasis be placed on the teaching of moral issues through a variety of curricular areas rather than predominantly through religious education, in order to reflect the diverse values and viewpoints represented in Scottish society.

Chapter five details the use of traditional stories, fairy tales and modern stories as one possible approach to teaching moral education and promoting moral development. The argument that TV and films are also useful media for such a purpose is examined. Again a limited collection of literature and research in this area is found, particularly with regards to research derived from classroom practice. It is argued that stories, TV programmes and films provide part of a common culture between home and school. Suggestions are given as to how an approach based on stories, TV programmes and films might offer one way forward for teachers and parents to share responsibility for moral education. Suggestions of how the approach might be implemented, what guidance might be given and how success might be determined are offered. The chapter highlights that other approaches to moral education are also necessary. It concludes that for any approach to moral education to be successful changes in policy, teacher education and indeed cultural norms are needed.

The final chapter details implications that have arisen from the findings of this review. Recommendations for how these implications might be acted upon and suggestions for further research are offered. The fundamental question of how moral education can be taught within a liberal democracy is re-addressed. The thesis acknowledges some perennial issues. First moral education is not simply a curricular area but also a way of guiding the whole life of the school and the people who work within it. Given that such guidance does not appear currently to inform many Scottish primary schools, the further question arises as to how schools, teachers, parents and students might transform themselves. Put simply how might an appropriate moral education of the young save society from some of the very problems that its elders have created?

# Chapter One – An Introduction to Moral Education

Debates surrounding moral education seem to offer no clear guidance on how morality should be taught within our schools. Wringe (2006) asserts that some go as far as to blame schools for society's moral problems:

> …if faced with concerns about rising rates of largely petty crime and anti-social behaviour among the young, occasionally highlighted by particularly shocking actions by individual young people, politicians should simply and straightforwardly locate the root cause of the problem in the failure of schools to be sufficiently energetic in teaching children the difference between right and wrong (p. 4).

Popular disagreements surrounding moral education seem to centre on three issues (for examples see Turiel in Nucci, 2001; Wringe, 2006; Halstead and Pike, 2006):

- the extent to which schools are to be held responsible for morally educating young people,
- how moral education should be taught,
- what it actually means to be 'moral'.

Kibble (1998) gives a particularly bleak description of the problems facing moral educators:

> …however positive teachers would wish to be in their teaching of moral education they will themselves always be open to the accusation that what they are doing is wrong. Because society itself has not achieved a consensus on some of its moral principles and because moral issues sometimes present themselves in morally difficult contexts the moral education teacher can always be seen as subversive on the one hand or indoctrinatory on the other (p. 60).

As a result of this and similar problems, education authorities and schools around the world seem increasingly to feel it necessary to offer programmes of moral education in an attempt to provide guidance for teachers and assurance for parents. According to Kohn (1997), many programmes based on concepts such as 'Values Education' and 'Character Education' do not generally provide teachers with a theoretical or philosophical basis for what they are teaching or how they are teaching it, but rather advertise outcomes that schools and teachers find appealing. In many places, educational policy on moral education has become more distant from moral philosophy (Nucci and Narvaez, 2008).

This chapter outlines three common philosophical perspectives on morality; Aristotelian, Kantian and Consequentialist. An evaluation is given of how these perspectives could inform policy and practice within moral education in schools and also, in society in general. It is argued that, although different, the three perspectives are not entirely distinct. Examination of the three perspectives shows that moral education is a feature of both the formal and 'hidden' curriculum. It is argued that moral education underpins all aspects of school life

and that teaching is best conceived primarily as a moral endeavour. The chapter concludes that teachers need a philosophical understanding of moral education.

## Theories of Moral Education

The debate surrounding moral education dates back, at least as far as, Socratic times (470 BC – 399BC) when Socrates asserted that the question of how we ought to live "must lie at the heart of any worthwhile educational endeavour" (Carr, 2003, p. 75). Socrates' student, Plato (427BC – 347BC) illuminated, in his work *Meno*, the idea of virtue; what it is, whether or not it can be taught, and if it can be possessed by all human beings. Plato went on to suggest that there are four possibilities to explain how individuals come to have virtue or 'excellences', these being that (in the words of Frankena, 1968, p. 5):

> (a) excellences are transmitted by being taught and acquired by being learned,
> (b) they are transmitted and acquired by practice,
> (c) they are natural or innate,
> (d) they are gifts of fortune or of the gods (or God).

Frankena (1968, p. 5) states that Plato generally preferred explanations (a) and (b), which suggests that Plato was a virtue ethic theorist. Whilst Prichard (cited in Mabbott, 1937, p. 468) suggests that Plato's *Republic* "maintains a utilitarian theory of the relation between right acts and their consequences", implying instead that Plato was a consequentialist. It can also be argued that Plato was a deontologist, since, according to Demos (1967):

> Plato holds that there are moral principles which are binding on man; and that an action is right in so far as it conforms to principle, irrespective of any desirable results it may have (p. 125).

Regardless of which interpretation is preferred, there is evidence to suggest that Plato was aware of each. An overview is now given.

Virtue Ethics Theory

Aristotle (384BC – 322BC) is widely taken to present "one of the most important works in the history of ethics" (Warburton, 2006, p. 19), namely *Nicomachean Ethics*, upon which virtue ethics theory is predominantly based. Frankena (1968, p.17) explains that through Aristotle's work one can infer that Aristotle "is even surer than Plato that he can define the various excellences (virtues) and outline a feasible program for producing them". Hence, it is necessary to firstly define what a virtue is and, more significantly, what Aristotle's interpretation of virtue is.

A virtue can be described as a personality trait or disposition, which influences the way that an individual acts in particular situations. Accordingly, "Aristotle's virtues are not simply generalised descriptions of outward actions but reflect the inner motives and commitments of the individual concerned" (Wringe, 2006, p. 63). Aristotle separates virtues into two categories; those which are intellectual, e.g., intelligence, and those which are moral, e.g., courage. Aristotle maintains that the virtues are interrelated and that "one cannot possess any of the virtues of character in a developed form without possessing all the others" (MacIntyre,

1985, p. 155). This raises the question of which virtues or character traits one should wish to adopt?

According to Warburton (2006, p. 23), Aristotle claims that for each virtue there are two vices, which the virtue falls between, e.g., "the virtue of courage lies between two vices; a deficiency of courage is cowardice; an excess of it is rashness". Aristotle (1962) states that virtues are "destroyed by excess and deficiency, and preserved by observance of the mean" (p. 77). To illustrate this Aristotle explains that "the man who runs away from everything in fear and never endures anything becomes a coward; the man who fears nothing whatsoever but encounters everything becomes rash" (*ibid.*). Thus neither man can be said to possess the virtue of courage. Yet, MacIntyre (1985, p. 152) argues that at times vices prevent individuals from committing an offence, rather than their virtues encouraging them to do the 'right' thing. For example, "cowardice can be someone's reason for not committing murder" (MacIntyre, 1985, p. 152). In this instance one might *appear* to be acting virtuously but for Aristotle the act would not be enough since according to Wringe (2006, p. 63) Aristotle implies that "we must not only perform virtuous acts but perform them out of a virtuous motivation".

Aristotle's idea of the 'mean' leads one to surmise that identification and cultivation of virtues requires great thought or what Warburton (2004, p. 55) describes as "intelligent judgement about the appropriate response to the situation you are in". It can be argued that without the necessary abilities to make an 'intelligent judgement' one may find it difficult to identify firstly, the

vices and secondly, the mean of them, in order to make a decision about how best to behave in a moral situation. According to Frankena (1968, p.46), Aristotle states that to make such a decision one must be endowed with the intellectual excellence of "*phronesis* or practical wisdom". *Phronesis* is one of Aristotle's concepts that has been interpreted in many different ways. Sherman (in Carr and Steutel, 1999) gives one explanation of practical wisdom:

> To be wise is to know how to exercise those virtues as circumstances require. In the case of courage, it is a matter of knowing what the demands of courage are in particular circumstances, when to be fearful, when to be confident, what counts as having the right mix of each, what ends are worth sacrificing one's life for; in the case of generosity, it is a matter of knowing when and how and toward whom generosity is well actualised, how much to give without leaving oneself destitute, how often is often enough and so on. In general, wisdom is a matter of seeing the morally relevant occasions for action, and then knowing, sometimes only after explicit deliberation, what to do (p. 36).

Frankena (1968, p. 47) explains that, for Aristotle, *phronesis* is based on an intuition of the 'right' way to act. Noel (1999, p. 284) suggests that there is a circularity of *phronesis* and moral character, in that one cannot be exhibited without the other. This implies that it may be possible for an individual to possess a moral character but be unable to make judgements about how to put his/her moral character into action. Without the practical abilities, Aristotle,

along with many others, would not judge such an individual to be a 'moral person'. It is clear that *phronesis* is a difficult aptitude to pursue and master. Sherman (*ibid*, p. 35) verifies this by stating that "practical wisdom is a lifelong pursuit". *Phronesis* can only be developed with experience and practice but it is argued that even that is not enough. Cordner (1994, p. 294) elucidates that "Aristotle holds our reason to be the distinctive ground of our moral worth… he does not think that all human beings are equally endowed with reason". Hence, the mastery of *phronesis* becomes naturally more or less achievable for some.

*Ideas underpinning virtue ethics*

One of the main ideas underpinning virtue ethics theory is that morality is dependant upon the development of an individual's character, rather than his/her adherence to a set of rules, to guide him/her towards virtuous action. But why strive to act virtuously at all? Plato tackles this question in *The Republic* when one of the main characters argues that a man who lives an unjust life is better off and happier than a man who lives a just life (Plato, 1848, p. 30). Plato suggests that it may be in one's self interest to not act justly or virtuously.

For Aristotle and Plato this is not the case. Aristotle argues that one should strive to act virtuously in the quest for *eudaimonia.* There have been various translations of *eudaimonia* but the most appropriate, Warburton (2006, p. 20) suggests, is human flourishing, which Aristotle states is "the most desirable of all good things" (Aristotle, 1962, p. 29). Warburton (2006) explains what Aristotle means by *eudaimonia*:

> *Eudaimonia* is not a blissful mental state. It is rather an activity, a way of living, one which brings with it its own pleasures, but which cannot be assessed in particular actions. The whole life of an individual has to be taken into account before we can say for certain that the person achieved *eudaimonia* (p.21).

Like *phronesis*, *eudaimonia* too is an end in itself. According to Aristotle (1962), in order to achieve *eudaimonia* one must pursue and foster the virtues. However, Aristotle (1962) does suggest that there are other important factors that could impact upon one's chances of achieving *eudaimonia* when he claims that "happiness (*eudaimonia*) does seem to require the addition of external prosperity" (p. 43). Examples of the external factors include; "friends", "wealth", "political power", "good birth", "satisfactory children" and "personal beauty" (Aristotle, 1962, p. 44). Thus, each individual must deal with his/her own personal circumstances when striving for *eudaimonia,* which like *phronesis*, arguably makes *eudaimonia* immediately more or less of a challenge for some individuals.

*Implications of virtue ethics theory for moral education*

Frankena (1968) provides an insightful analysis of what Aristotle's virtue ethics theory means in terms of the aims and methods of moral education. He explains that for Aristotle:

> …ideally, at least, individuals who have the necessary capacities should be educated into the required dispositions and then left to carry on pretty much under their own steam – in a kind of autonomy motivated by desire to do what is excellent for its own sake (p. 40).

Thus, pupils should be encouraged to foster a belief that acting virtuously is the right thing to do. The pupils' education must also aim to bestow them with a disposition to act virtuously. A programme of education should involve instruction to equip pupils with the knowledge of what is the right thing to do and should attempt to begin to educate pupils in intellectual excellences, such as *phronesis* (Frankena, 1968, p. 55). Pupils should be provided with opportunities to learn by doing, since Aristotle (1962) implies that one can only become truly virtuous by taking part in virtuous activity:

> …we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts (p. 73).

Brown (2000, p. 417) explains that this kind of learning can be referred to as "moral apprenticeship", which involves "seeing and imitating the masters". According to Carr (2003, p. 81), parents, guardians and teachers have an important role to play in moral apprenticeship, which should entail being "exemplars of the highest values and virtues of a given way of life".

Aristotle (1962) highlights the influence of parents and guardians in shaping a child's moral character from an early stage:

> …theory and teaching are not, I fear, equally efficacious in all cases: the soil must have been previously tilled if it is to foster the seed, the mind of the pupil must have been prepared by the cultivation of habits, so as to like and to dislike aright (p. 681)

It is also a concern of Aristotle's that individuals should be able to act virtuously in a social context, i.e., with and around one another. Carr (1991, p. 47) explains that for Aristotle "man is essentially a social animal whose ultimate good even as an individual person can only be realised in the context of some sort of human society". It seems likely that a virtue ethics approach to education would include immersion in many social situations.

Cain (2005, p.173) highlights that Aristotle continuously returns to the idea that some pupils already possess something within themselves that helps them to become truly virtuous. It may also be that some pupils are born into more favourable circumstances. This view strongly links with that of Plato, Aristotle's teacher, who affirms in *The Republic* that citizens of an ideal state can be separated into three distinct groups with distinct roles and power, allocated on account of innate factors out with one's control (Warburton, 2006).

For both Aristotle and Plato, it is inappropriate and unnecessary for all pupils to be given the same education. According to Carr (2007, p. 375), Aristotle argues that "it is no less unjust to treat unequals equally than to treat equals unequally". According to Frankena (1968), Aristotle proposes that pupils who do not possess the capability to foster a virtuous disposition should instead be

given vocational training, which will prepare them for work. In relation to moral education, Frankena (1968, p. 76) goes on to explain that it is Aristotle's intention that such pupils "must of course have a kind of moral education, for they are required to be temperate, just, etc., insofar as they can and in a form appropriate to their stations in life".

Aristotle (1962) also suggests that it may be necessary for a set of rules or laws to be put in place to initially guide pupils' behaviour. One surmises that such rules would continue to be useful for pupils who lack the "necessary capacities" (Frankena, 1968, p. 40) to foster a virtuous disposition. Frankena (1968, p. 59) suggests that in this way, Aristotle believes that pupils will form "a habit of doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong". Aristotle may have referred to this as "character training", which Carr (2007, p. 373) goes on to explain is "necessary but not sufficient for virtue".

To return to moral apprenticeship, it is Aristotle's belief that pupils can learn about virtue by observing other people being virtuous and from the listening to the lessons that are "handed down" from the generations before them (Wringe, 2006, p. 64). Carr (2007) suggests that this has implications for the expectations placed upon individuals who wish to enter the teaching profession, and that only those who exhibit signs of a virtuous character should be admitted. As well as being role models themselves, Wringe (2006, p. 65) proposes that teachers may also provide pupils with examples of people who are considered to be virtuous, such as role models from "real life, History or fictional tales". This approach is revisited in Chapter 5 in discussion of the use of stories, TV and film

as a vehicle for moral education. For now, the purpose of providing examples of virtuous characters and virtuous activity is two-fold. Firstly, for pupils who are unequipped to make choices about how to act in moral situation they provide examples to copy. Secondly, for pupils who have the capacity to develop *phronesis,* the examples encourage contemplation and help pupils begin to reason about how to act in the moral situations that they encounter. Again a distinction is made between behaving virtuously out of habit and behaving virtuously out of 'intelligent judgement', choice or contemplation, which Aristotle attributes the greatest worth (Warburton, 2006, p. 26) and hence, affords the best chance of achieving *eudaimonia*.

*Impact of virtue ethics theory on society*

A major criticism of Aristotle's theory is that it is clearly "elitist" (Warburton, 2006, p. 28). Even although Aristotle states that all individuals have a place within society, his theory undoubtedly favours particular groups within society, mainly the group of individuals who are capable of fostering the virtues and those capable of philosophical contemplation. Aristotle's theory implies that not all citizens are born equal and does not afford the same opportunities for all, for example, not all citizens are entitled to the same education.

Wringe (2006) explains that virtues are passed down through tradition and that current citizens of society learn them from their elders and, as previously discussed, by living with others considered to be virtuous. Aristotle, like Plato, believes that the state should be responsible for educating its citizens and in

doing so it must set up "laws to regulate the discipline of adults ... and in fact the whole life of the people in general" (Aristotle, 1962, p. 633). One could surmise that the laws are put in place to protect those who are incapable of moral contemplation or those who choose to voluntarily do wrong even although they are fully aware of their own wrong doing, i.e., "the incontinent man" (Frankena, 1968, p.44). Aristotle claims that a truly virtuous person will behave morally even if no laws are in place. Yet, Aristotle must be aware that even with such laws in place some individuals will behave viciously (the opposite of virtuously) since he proposes that the response to such an offence would be exclusion, either permanently, i.e., through "execution or irrevocable exile", or temporarily i.e., through "imprisonment or exile for a term" (MacIntyre, 1985, p. 151). One can make links between this part of the system that Aristotle proposes and the criminal justice system that is in place within our own society today.

Lastly, Aristotle claims that it is human nature for individuals to want to "live a good life and indeed the best possible life" (Ackrill, 1973, p. 18), or in other words to strive for *eudaimonia*. However, Ackrill (*ibid.*) argues that it is plausible that each individual will assess the best, most desirable and most worthwhile life differently. It is for this reason that Warnock (1971, p.91) objects to Aristotle's meaning of *eudaimonia,* which implies that one way of life or "life-style" is more supreme than all others. Warnock (*ibid.*) argues that there is just as much reason for us to believe that other 'life-styles' or 'characters' are just as morally valuable. Similarly, Wringe (2006, p.66 – 67) poses the question "are there objective criteria according to which some ways of life may be pronounced

flourishing and others not?" Hence it might seem that virtue ethics offers no guidance for a multicultural society underpinned by diverse lifestyles and values. However, Carr (2003) argues to the contrary. He writes:

> Indeed, perhaps the supreme virtue of Aristotelian virtue ethics lies in it recognition of the way in which moral principles are essentially regulative of aspects of human nature and association – natural inclinations, needs, sentiments and sensibilities – that render the virtues crucial to human integrity and well-being in *any* cultural context (p. 81).

He goes on to say:

> …it is by no means clear that there is not a significant measure of common and cross-cultural agreement concerning the general qualities of mind and character in terms of which we assess people as morally better or worse… the fact that we may disagree with others on matters of particular moral belief does not prevent us from recognising, on the part of some of those whose views we do not share, commitment to a range of qualities in terms of which a decent life is generally - in all likelihood inevitably - characterised: integrity, honesty, tolerance, care, compassion and so on. It is all but certain that virtue dispositions such as these would have to enter into *anything* recognisable as a 'best picture' of moral life … (p. 206).

Carr's argument is given further consideration in Chapter 2.

**Duty-based Theory**

One of the main proponents of duty-based theory, also known as deontology, is Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) whose work entitled the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) "has probably inspired more love and hatred, and more passionate commentary, than any other in the history of moral philosophy" (Blackburn, 2001 p.117). It is through this work that Kant begins to explain his understanding of morality, which Warburton (2006, p. 126) suggests has "stood the test of time as a succinct statement of a duty based or deontological moral theory".

A further source of duty-based theory is the wide variety of religious doctrines that exist. Warnock (1971, p.142) claims "if there is no God, then everything is 'permitted' - not of course in the sense that nothing is morally either right or wrong, but in the sense that nothing is *commanded*, and nothing is *forbidden*." Accordingly, Blackburn (2001, p.10) states that "for many people, ethics is not only tied up with religion, but is completely settled by it", while Warburton (2004, p. 40) explains that "our whole conception of what morality is has been shaped by religious doctrine". One argues that the duty-based theories proposed through religion have an important role to play in our understanding of what morality is and of how one becomes a moral agent. Some attention is given to the principles of religion as a duty-based theory of morality within this section of the review, while further detail regarding the impact of religion on

moral education is provided in Chapter 4 on policy and practice within Scottish primary education.

*What is duty?*

Lexico Publishing Group, LLC (2007) defines duty as “something that one is expected or required to do by moral or legal obligation”. Heichelbech (2003, p. 339) states that deontology “refers to any approach to ethics that emphasizes obligation or duty”. Hence, deontology is based on the principle that an action is right if it follows one’s obligations or duties and “specifically excludes consequences as a basis for moral judgment” (Heichelbech, *ibid*.). Kant’s theory is based on a similar premise. Warburton (2006, p. 127) summarises this as follows “acting from a motive of duty is acting simply because you know that it is the right thing to do, not from any other motive”. One can link the idea of motive being all important with Aristotle’s notion that individuals must always act from a virtuous motivation and that, even although a person may appear to be acting morally, the reason behind their action may not be a moral one at all. Kant (1976) uses the now famous example of the shopkeeper to illustrate how a person can *appear* to be acting from a motive of duty. In the example, the shopkeeper has the opportunity to overcharge a child who comes into his shop but instead he chooses not to in order to be “perceived as an honest merchant so that his business does not decline” (Johnston, 2007, p. 239). For Kant, it is possible for a person to *appear* to be acting from a sense of duty but that he/she can truly be acting in that way for “a selfish purpose” (Kant, 1976, p. 59). Hence, the shopkeeper’s action was not moral.

In terms of religious duties, Warburton (2004) explains duty from a Judaeo-Christian perspective:

> The Ten Commandments list various duties and forbidden activities. These duties apply regardless of the consequences of carrying them out: they are absolute duties. Someone who believes that the Bible is the word of God will have no doubt about the meaning of 'right' and 'wrong': 'right' means what God wills, and 'wrong' means anything which is against God's will. For such a believer morality is a matter of following absolute commands given by the external authority, God (p. 40).

Kant's duty based theory of morality links with the Judaeo-Christian theory since neither considers the consequences of one's actions to be an influential factor, and both require one to act from a sense of what is right, which from a religious view point means doing what God requires. Wringe (2006) highlights that there is a chance, as with Kant's theory, that individuals adhering to duty based theory guided by religion may appear to be acting from a motivation to do what God desires and hence fulfil their duty but may instead be greatly influenced by "the threat of harm or promise of great reward" (p. 22), i.e., in the form of acceptance to Heaven or banishment to Hell. These motives would in turn "deprive good actions of their virtuous character by making them self-interested" (Wringe, 2006, p. 22) and not based upon duty at all.

*Duty and Inclination*

Kant further illustrates the importance of the motive by drawing a distinction between acting from duty and acting from inclination. The definition of inclination, as offered by Cambridge University Press (2007), is "a feeling that makes a person want to do something". Kant (2005, p. 60) implies that nature bestows different inclinations upon individuals, which leads Warburton (2006, p. 127) to suggest that "it is a matter of luck whether or not you happen to have a compassionate nature". In a given situation, due to the variable inclinations of individuals, it is feasible that each individual could react in a different way. Kant might assert that some individuals, i.e., those who do not naturally have inclinations that drive them towards commendable behaviour, are automatically disadvantaged. Warburton (2004, p. 43) implies that for Kant such a disadvantage would be unacceptable since, unlike Aristotle, Kant believes that "all people can be moral". However, the only way that morality can be achieved is to act upon one's sense of duty. In doing so, one also acts upon what Kant (1976) calls a good will.

But how does one know that one is acting out of duty rather than inclination? Blackburn (2001) presents one of Kant's solutions to this problem when he states:

> It is true, he (Kant) thinks, that we can never be sure that we are acting from our sense of duty alone, since our motives are often mixed and often hidden from us. But at least we can set ourselves to do so. We can

> distance ourselves from our mundane desires and wishes, and set ourselves to act as duty requires (p. 123).

Kant offers further ways of testing whether or not the motive behind one's actions is duty, and in doing so, helps one to realise what one's duty commands. The next section of this review outlines and analyses Kant's recommendations.

*The main principles of duty-based theory*

*Maxims*

For Kant the intention or motive of an action is all important. Denis (in Kant, 2005, p. 22) states that "according to Kant all actions…. have maxims underlying them". Warburton (2004, p. 44) defines a maxim as "the general principle underlying an action". Therefore, a maxim can be seen as a rule or motto that guides one's decision when making a moral judgement about how to act. For example, if one holds the maxim 'Always help a hurt animal' then one is obliged to stop and help an animal that is injured at the side of the road, regardless of how busy the road is, what time of day it is and whether or not one has time to stop and help. This judgement and subsequent action differ greatly from the subsequent action based on the maxim 'Always help a hurt animal, if you have time to do so'. Thus, Kant identified that not all maxims are moral and consequently "provides a way of identifying moral from other maxims with his categorical imperative" (Warburton, 2006, p.128).

*The Categorical Imperative*

For Kant "the categorical imperative would be one which presented an action as of itself objectively necessary, without regard to any other end" (Kant, 1976, p. 63). Warburton (2004, p. 44) clarifies the meaning of categorical imperatives when he explains that they are "commands" or "duties… in other words they are absolute and unconditional" and "they apply whatever consequences might follow from obeying them". Categorical imperatives help one to know *how* to act out of a sense of duty, and thus which maxims to adhere to.

It can be argued that many religions provide categorical imperatives for their followers through "a system of dos and don'ts" (Warburton, 2004, p.41), which clearly state which behaviours are expected and forbidden, e.g., the Ten Commandments for Judaeo- Christians, and the Five Pillars of Islam and Sharia law for Muslims. Thus, when making a moral decision about how to act one has to ensure that one's motive is in line with one's duty as set out by one's God. In this situation there is no need to work out what the categorical imperatives are. Rather they are simply given to be followed. Yet, one might question whether or not such commandments can be considered categorical imperatives since, as previously mentioned, followers of religion may be influenced by other ends, such as acceptance to Heaven or banishment to Hell.

In addition, Kant (1976) provides further criteria for identifying one's duties and for knowing how to act morally when he insists "I should never act in such a way that I could not will that my maxim should be a universal law" (p.63). For

Kant this is the supreme categorical imperative. According to Warburton (2006) it implies that:

> …if an action is morally wrong, it is morally wrong for everyone, including you. If an action is morally right, it is morally right for anyone in relevantly similar circumstances (p.129).

To illustrate, Kant (1976) offers the example of a man who borrows money and promises to pay it back (in order to secure the loan), even although he is fully aware that he will not be able to do so. Kant (1976, p. 81) states that the man is acting upon the maxim: "When I believe myself to be in need of money, I will borrow money and promise to repay it, although I know I shall never do so". Blackburn (2001, p.117) suggests that one way to test if an action could be universalised is to ask "What if everybody did that?" Warburton (2006) explains that in doing so with the above action, Kant found that if the maxim were to be universalised then everybody could legitimately make a false promise when they needed to, meaning that "the whole institution of promising would be undermined" (Warburton, 2006, p. 129). Thus, a moral maxim is one that is universable and could be willed upon every individual without dire consequences to the way in which the world functions. Blackburn (2001) links Kant's idea that a moral maxim is one that is universable with the Christian, or as he claims Confucian, idea of the "Golden Rule" which states "Do as you would be done by" (p. 117).

This is not to say that all universable maxims are moral ones. Indeed, it can be argued that at times individuals argue "Everyone does it!" in order to justify an

inappropriate or illegal action, e.g., breaking the speed limit on the motorway. This does not mean that breaking the speed limit on the motorway is a moral action, even although one could will that all drivers adhere to the following maxim: 'I will keep up with the other vehicles on the motorway, even if this means breaking the speed limit', without one might propose too much objection. Wringe (2006) argues that although Kant's theory may offer a strategy for determining which actions or maxims should not be followed, i.e., those that could not be willed as universal laws, it does not provide a fully comprehensive strategy for determining precisely which set of maxims are categorical imperatives.

Kant (1976, p. 87) provides a further categorical imperative to guide one in making a decision about how to behave, which is: "act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only". In summary, this implies that in choosing maxims to adhere to one must respect one's fellow human beings by treating them as ends in themselves, never as means. Similarly, one must not allow one's self to be treated as a means either. To return to the earlier example of the man who falsely promised to repay the money he had borrowed, he treated the person who lent him the money as a means to an end, i.e., a means of getting money, rather than an end in him/herself.

Kant's phrasing of the categorical imperative narrows the possibilities for moral action. Even if a maxim can be universalised, if it involves using a person or group of people as a means to an end rather than an end in themselves then it

cannot be considered to be a moral maxim. For example, the maxim 'Only borrow money if you will be able to pay back the amount that you have borrowed and any interest that is asked for in return' can be universalised, however, it is eliminated as a moral maxim on account of the opportunity that it provides the person who is lending the money to overcharge you and hence use you to make more money. It can be suggested that any maxim regarding money is unlikely to be a moral one since money has "no real intrinsic value at all" (Hodges, cited in Ashcraft, 1991, p. 306) and is used simply as a means to an end.

There are some criticisms of Kant's moral theory. Warburton (2004) offers the following:

> If a madman carrying an axe asked me where my friend was, my first inclination would be to tell a lie. To tell the truth would be to shirk the duty that I have to protect my friend. But on the other hand, according to Kant, to tell a lie, even in such an extreme situation, would be an immoral act: I have an absolute duty never to lie (p. 46).

Wringe (2006, p. 60) concurs that human interactions are more complicated than Kant gives credit for when he states "the attempt to apply a single principle to all situations of decision or moral judgement is bound sometimes to lead to distortion, inhumanity or even the justification of evident wickedness".

However, Kant (1996) provides a response to such criticisms:

> A subject may have, in a rule he prescribes to himself, two grounds of obligation, one or the other of which is not sufficient to put him under obligation, so that one of them is not a duty. When two such grounds conflict with each other, practical philosophy says, not that the stronger obligation takes precedence, but that the stronger ground of obligation prevails (p. 16 – 17).

From the earlier example, one hopes, although cannot assume, that the person involved has a stronger ground of obligation to protect his/her friend than to never lie. Since, as Blackburn (2001, p. 119) states "we often want people to act out of love or gratitude, not out of duty".

*Implications of duty-based theory for moral education*

According to Frankena (1968) Kant does not make a distinction between the educations of pupils from one country to another, or from one culture to another. Similarly, Frankena (*ibid*.) claims that Kant desires all pupils, regardless of social class, to be provided with the same education, or at least a similar education, depending on the pupils' individual capabilities. The chapter now focuses on what Kant's philosophy of education implies for pupils in general.

Kant (1992) states that:

> The first endeavour of moral education is the formation of character. Character consists in readiness to act in accordance with

> ‘maxims’. At first they are school ‘maxims’ and later the ‘maxims’ of mankind (p. 84).

This indicates that education should be a form of training, one purpose of which is “to counteract man’s natural unruliness” (Kant, 1992, p. 3) or to help pupils to try to control their natural inclinations. This is similar to Aristotle’s idea that pupils who are incapable of making moral decisions should be given a set of rules to follow. However, “for Kant it is not enough to teach children what their duties are, since he, unlike Socrates, believes that one may know his duty and yet not do it” (Frankena, 1968, p. 96), thus education must also help pupils to cultivate a will to act upon one’s sense of duty.

Kant dismisses the use of rewards to coerce pupils into following the rules, as he asserts that this provides pupils with a false sense of what society is like, i.e., that society always rewards good deeds, and thus encourages pupils to always act in a way that provides them with the most reward or the least punishment, rather than from a sense of duty (Kant, 1992, p. 84). However, Kant does provide a place for punishment within his theory and suggests that moral punishment, e.g., “a look of contempt” and, less frequently, physical punishment, e.g., “the infliction of pain” (Kant, 1992, p. 88) should be used if a pupil disobeys the rules that are in place, but should not be used as a means of motivating pupils to behave in the ‘correct’ way. Tunick (1996, p. 61) explains that Kant is understood by many “to argue that we punish not for any consequences, such as to deter future crimes, or to reform or incapacitate the criminal, but rather for the sake of punishing, because punishing in itself is just, or right”.

This implies that compliance and hence obedience to the rules or 'maxims' is very important in Kant's theory. In fact, he states that "above all things, obedience is an essential character of a child… This obedience is two-fold including absolute obedience to his master's commands and obedience to what he feels to be a good and reasonable will" (Kant, 1992, p. 85). Kant (*ibid*.) explains that obedience can be further categorised into obedience that arises from "compulsion" and obedience that is "voluntary". Kant (1992, p. 20) claims that both types of obedience are necessary, which is particularly evident when he states "It is, however, not enough that children should be merely broken in; for it is of greater importance that they shall learn to think". According to Frankena (1968, p. 92) it is Kant's desire that education should encourage "self-reliance and independence, thinking for oneself, capacity to exercise free will and make one's own decisions". From a classroom perspective, one can envisage that the teacher will make pupils aware of the importance of rules and emphasise the need for them to be followed, while he/she will also encourage pupils to have a hand in developing the rules. However, according to Kant (1992, p. 81) "they (the pupils) must not be allowed to argue about everything", as he explains there are times when an individual has a duty to obey the laws of society, pay taxes or go to work "even though he may not like it" (p. 86 - 87), and thus pupils must experience this while at school. The above statement introduces Kant's distinctions of duties, which he separates into internal and external duties. Kant (1996, p. 31) explains that "all duties are either *duties of right* (*officia iuris*), that is duties for which external lawgiving is possible, or *duties of virtue (officia virtutis s. ethica),* for which external lawgiving is not

possible”. Tunick (1996, p. 64) further describes Kant’s distinction as one which distinguished between “legal duty” and “moral duty”. The duties highlighted by Kant (1992, p. 86- 87) above appear to be duties of right, or in other words external or legal duties.

In addition, Kant maintains that at other times individuals will have to make moral decisions for themselves by acting upon personal maxims. For Kant, to act upon one’s personal maxims is to obey one’s internal duties. Kant (1996, p. 31) states “no external lawgiving can bring about someone’s setting an end for himself (because this is an internal act of the mind)”. Hence, in order to identify and obey one’s internal duties, pupils must also learn to reason (Frankena, 1968) and make use of judgement, which Fisher (2003, p.43) explains “for Kant is a peculiar talent which can only be practised, it cannot be taught like a form of knowledge”. One likens this to Aristotle’s ideas on personal contemplation and moral apprenticeship. As with Aristotle, Kant (1992) discusses the idea that lessons on morality and humanity are passed on from generation to generation.

One can concur that it is Kant’s intention that pupils be given opportunities within their education to practise and improve their use of judgement, or in other words to test their personal maxims in real situations and through discussion with others. Through practice, discussion and by learning from the experience of others it is Kant’s intention that each individual will come to develop an “internal judge” or “conscience”, which “follows him like his shadow when he plans to escape” from his internal duties (Kant, 1996, p. 189). According to Johnston (2007, p. 234), it is Kant’s hope that when faced with a

moral judgement an individual will be able to refer to his/her "existing stock of rules, norms, duties and laws" to quickly rule out a number of possible actions that might be taken, so that an individual need only deliberate upon his/her personal maxims from time to time.

Kant (1992) comments on the suitability of some individuals to morally educate pupils over others when he writes:

> It is noticeable that man is only educated by man – that is, by men who have themselves been educated. Hence with some people it is want of discipline and instruction on their own part, which in turn makes them unfit educators of their pupils. Were some being of higher nature than man to undertake our education, we should then be able to see what man might become (p. 6).

Hence, Kant implies that a pupil's moral education can only be as good as the moral education of those who teach him. This being the case a high benchmark must be set for the moral education and training of teachers.

*Impact of duty-based theory on society*

Appiah (2002, p. 70) states that "we (citizens of society) want our fellow citizens to know what is morally required and what is morally forbidden because we want them to do as they should and abstain from doing what they should not". It might be argued that there is a limitation to Kant's theory in that although Kant provides detailed guidance about how maxims might be formed and

tested, he does not provide a definitive set of laws for society to subscribe to. Wringe (2006, p. 57) explains that this is because Kant advocated a "kingdom of ends", which can be described as "a sort of parliament of all rational beings promulgating universal laws both binding on and chosen by themselves". In practical terms, one might argue that on consulting the views of the citizens of a liberal democracy various sets of laws could be drawn up that adhere to Kant's limitations but that conflict with one another. Such conflict provides citizens of a liberal democracy with a difficult, and perhaps impossible, decision about which set to adhere to. It might be suggested that a decision could only be reached fairly and without bias by adopting Rawls' 'original position', in which each participant's personal details, i.e., likes, dislikes, status, gender, etc., are hidden from them behind a "veil of ignorance" (Rawls, 1999, p. 118), in order to allow each participant to make a decision that is not based on personal interest. Yet, if Carr (1993, p. 206) is correct about the fundamental worth of Aristotelian virtues then one wonders if it is likely that all citizens would select laws that would require everyone to live by the same values.

Kant must be afforded credit for being "a great democrat" (Blackburn, 2001, p. 124) because he argues that each person within society is valued and considered. Further evidence to support the argument is provided through Kant's assertion that one should always treat one's fellow human beings as ends in themselves, rather than as means to an end. For Wringe (2006):

> … the demand nowadays widely accepted, that even though someone may have the power and even the undisputed right to do

> something, he or she should at least consult those who will be affected by it and hear any objections they may have (p. 58).

However, Wringe (2006, p. 56) does challenge Kant's theory and its subsequent implications for society when he argues that it "would take no account of human needs, shortcomings, desires or inclinations but apply, in principle to all rational beings whatsoever and wherever". Hand (2006, in Johnston, 2007) concurs that one's desires and passions are very difficult to control, let alone dismiss. This may imply that citizens of any type of society would find Kant's theory difficult to realistically put into practice, as part of their daily lives.

A final criticism is of Kant's assertion that it is only the intention of an action, not its consequences, that is important in considering it's moral worth. Frankena (in Rowson, 1973, p.12) warns that "It is not the road to Heaven, but the road to Hell, that is said to be paved with good intentions". While, Warburton (2004, p. 47) states that by focusing solely on intentions "well-intentioned idiots who unintentionally cause a number of deaths through incompetence might be morally blameless". It is argued that this could cause an unnecessary risk to society and such a theory might not provide justice for those who have been aggrieved by such individuals.

**Consequentialist Theory**

Blackburn (2001, p. 87) explains that a consequentialist theory is one that "looks to the effects or consequences of actions in order to assess them". In relation to

morality, this implies that a consequentialist would consider the consequences of a specific action in order to assess whether it is 'right' or 'wrong'.

Warburton (2004, p. 48) claims that "utilitarianism is the best-known type of consequentialist ethical theory". The following sections of the review discuss the theory of utilitarianism and the implications that it has for moral education and for the citizens of a liberal democracy.

It can be argued that utilitarianism dates as far back as Platonic times when utilitarianism "was recognised by Plato in the *Republic*" (Barrow, 1975, p. 1). However to return to more recent times, although "John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873) is the most famous utilitarian philosopher" (Warburton, 2006, p. 153), the theory is claimed to be founded by Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832). Bentham was Mill's godfather and had a hand in Mill's strict utilitarian upbringing (Reeves, 2007). The strong connection between Bentham and Mill may explain why both their versions of utilitarianism reflect some of the same beliefs about and approaches to morality. However, as well as continuing to promote utilitarianism, Lindsay (Mill in Mill, 1910, p. viii) claims that Mill also generated "utilitarianism with a difference" through his refined version of the theory.

*The main principles of consequentialist theory*

Wringe (2006, p. 44) defines utilitarianism as "the view that right action is that which, in the long run, brings about the greatest sum of happiness or the least amount of pain". Warburton (2006, p. 154) explains that at times the aim of

utilitarianism is instead stated as "the greatest happiness of the greatest number". He asserts that this statement gives a false impression of the theory, since for utilitarians it is possible that an action that makes one person extremely happy has greater worth than an action that makes several people mildly happy.

The theory of utilitarianism, in its simplest form, is based upon Bentham's beliefs about morality. One such belief, expressed in Bentham's *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation,* is that:

> …nature has placed mankind under two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do (Mill and Bentham, 1987, p. 65)

MacIntyre (1985, p. 63) states that it is upon this premise that Bentham asserts that individuals should choose the action, from the range of possible actions, that "will produce as its consequence the greatest happiness – that is, the greatest possible quantity of pleasure with the smallest possible quantity of pain". However, MacIntyre (1985), Blackburn (2001) and many others argue that Bentham makes an unrealistic leap between the motive to avoid pain and seek pleasure for oneself and the desire to behave in a way that aims to achieve the greatest overall happiness in the world, especially when, at times, this may result in less happiness for oneself. Gutmann (1982, p. 262) agrees that to forego one's happiness in this way takes "a sizeable amount of self-sacrifice". Nonetheless, Wringe (2006) explains that some utilitarians argue that to temporarily forego one's happiness ultimately leads to more satisfaction/less

guilt for that person in the future and thus, is consistent with Bentham's original premise.

Warnock (1971) highlights a further flaw in the theory of utilitarianism when he questions how happiness should be measured and used to judge the course of one's actions. It can be argued that Bentham does provide some guidance on this matter. Firstly, Bentham (1830, p. 206) states "the game of pushpin is of equal value with the arts and sciences of music and poetry". Bentham (*ibid*.) explains that the "value" is based upon "the pleasure they yield". Bentham implies, perhaps worryingly, that it is not important how pleasure is produced, only that the *most* amount of pleasure is produced. Hence, one's calculations do not need to take account of what method has been used to produce pleasure. Blackburn (2001) outlines the factors that Bentham expects to be collectively considered when measuring pleasure:

> …its subjective intensity, its duration, the probability of it happening, its nearness or remoteness from an agent in time, and its effects on producing or inhibiting yet further pleasures (p. 81).

It can be argued, after taking a close look at the list, that each factor in itself is difficult to accurately measure, therefore leading back to Warnock's original argument.

It is suggested that Mill himself found Bentham's approach to pleasure "crude" (Warburton, 2004, p. 49) and, while agreeing that humans have a desire to avoid pain and seek pleasure, Mill argues that "some pleasures are more desirable and

more valuable than others" (Mill and Bentham, 1987, p. 279). Donner (1991, p. 48) explains that in this way Mill creates two categories of pleasures, those that are "intellectual" (higher) pleasures and those that are "sensual" (lower) pleasures. According to Blackburn (2001, p. 82), Mill claims that individuals who have experienced higher pleasures "inevitably prefer them". Despite that "a being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy" and "is capable probably of more acute suffering" (Mill and Bentham, 1987, p. 280). Here a link is made with Plato's '*Allegory of The Cave*'. The prisoners who are released from Plato's cave into the real world are akin to the individuals who have experienced higher pleasures. Just as the prisoners, when asked to return to the "shadowy existence" (Warburton, 2006, p. 5) of the cave cannot be happy with what they find there, individuals who have experienced higher pleasures cannot then return to being wholly satisfied by lower pleasures. This seems to imply that for Mill, whenever possible, higher pleasures should be promoted over lower pleasures.

With this in mind, Mill, while attempting to make the assessment of pleasure easier, creates an additional problem for the theory of utilitarianism. Warburton (2006, p. 157) states that the introduction of higher and lower pleasures makes "the calculation and comparison of consequences of actions far more complex", since one is faced with the difficulty of trying to judge to what extend each possible action promotes lower and higher pleasures, not only for oneself, but rather for each person that might be affected by the action.

It can be argued that the theory of utilitarianism is difficult to put into practice, particularly when one is short on time and has to make a quick decision about how to act. One can assert, as Wringe (2006, p. 48) does, that "utilitarianism seems to demand too much of us".

However, Mill (1910) objects to this argument and suggests that the same could be said for other theories of morality when he states that some would argue that:

> …it is impossible to guide our conduct by Christianity, because there is not time on every occasion on which anything has to be done, to read through the Old and New Testaments (p. 21 - 22).

Virtue ethics and deontology also support the idea that making moral decisions should require contemplation, either at the time of the decision, beforehand or afterwards. Like Aristotle, Mill (1910, p. 22) claims that individuals learn how to make moral decisions through making moral decisions and by learning from the moral experiences of others. Mill (*ibid*.) suggests that one is prevented from always having to contemplate which action to take in every moral situation by drawing upon one's previous experiences and knowledge.

Warburton (2006, p. 158) explains that while Mill thinks it acceptable that individuals can create general rules about how to act based upon their experiences, these rules should be flexible in order to take into account the particular circumstances of each situation. This view strongly contrasts with Kant and is justified by Mill (1910) when he writes:

> …it is not the fault of any creed, but of the complicated nature of human affairs, that rules of conduct cannot be so framed as to require no exceptions, and that hardly any kind of action can safely be laid down as either always obligatory or always condemnable (p. 23)

*Implications of consequentialist theory for moral education*

Mill (1863, p. 25) makes his feelings about the influence of education clear when he states that it has "so vast a power over human character". Mill (1863, p. 81 – 82) goes so far as to agree that a criminal cannot be held responsible for his character "for his education, and the circumstances which surrounded him, have made him a criminal".

Hence, it is suggested that education must encourage pupils to consider the consequences of their actions from an early stage. Wringe (2006, p. 44) states that moral education must also "ensure that young people acquire sufficient knowledge of the world to be able to think through the consequences of their actions". While Mill (1910, p. 16) asserts, in more specific utilitarian terms, that education should aim to "establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the good of the whole". Thus, pupils must be encouraged to regard the achievement of the greatest happiness as the most desirable consequence of their actions, even when this means their own happiness is sacrificed.

Habibi (2001, p. 159) explains that although, in general, Mill argued against paternalism "in the case of children he regarded it as appropriate". This is confirmed when Mill (1998a, p. 344) states that "children below a certain age cannot judge or act for themselves" and thus advocates that both the state and parents should intervene, to varying degrees, in the education of children.

McDonough and Feinberg (2002, p. 4) state that Mill argues for a "largely private system of education". Primarily for Mill the responsibility of education lies with parents and is evident when Mill (1998a) states:

> The duties of parents to their children are those which are indissolubly attached to the fact of causing the existence of a human being. The parent owes to society to endeavour to make the child a good and valuable member of it, and owes to the children to provide, so far as depends on him, such education, and such appliances and means, as will enable them to start with a fair chance of achieving by their own exertions a successful life (p. 31).

Mill's statement suggests that, to a certain extent, parents are free to educate their children as they see fit, as long as they strive to help their children become 'good' citizens. However, Mill (1998) is aware that not all parents will honour this responsibility and hence, he suggests that the government should intervene if parents are not suitably educating their children. These views on education are in line with Mill's beliefs about liberty. West (1965) further outlines Mill's proposals for education:

> …first, education was to be made compulsory by law; secondly, the State was to see that this law was respected not by providing state schools (except in exceptional circumstances) but by instituting a system of examinations. Should a child fail to attain a certain minimum standard then his parents were to be taxed and the proceeds devoted to his continued education (p. 134 - 135).

Intervention strategies to force parents to accept their responsibilities are currently being introduced by the UK government. An Education White Paper launched by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) states:

> …new Home School Agreements will give parents a clearer understanding of their own responsibilities toward their child's schooling, especially around behaviour. In applying for a school place every parent will agree to adhere to the school's behaviour rules. Once their child is in school, the parents will be expected to sign the agreement each year and will face real consequences if they fail to live up to the responsibilities set out within it, including the possibility of a court-imposed parenting order. In turn, parents will also have the right to complain if they believe the school is not holding other parents to their responsibilities. (p. 6).

These reforms insist that both schools and parents take responsibility for monitoring the standards of education and behaviour of children. It is proposed that schools and parents will have more power to act if either group feels that the responsibilities are not being fulfilled. It is argued that this approach while trying to force schools and parents to unite for the sake of children's education

may instead add to a potential conflict that may already exists. The importance of everyone working together to tackle moral education is further discussed later in this thesis.

It is pertinent that Mill did agree, at a later stage in his life, to the idea of a state run education system and he concurred that it should be the responsibility of the government to train teachers to a high standard (Garforth, 1980, p. 114). It is likely that Mill came to realise that a state run education system offered an effective way for the government to regulate the education of children.

The detailed guidance that Mill offers on moral education highlights both the level of importance that he places on morally educating the young, and his awareness that not everyone willingly accepts this responsibility. This problem is highlighted again in Chapter 4 on Policy Analysis.

*Mill as a liberal thinker and the impact of consequentialist theory on society*

As well as being a utilitarian, Mill is also widely recognised as a liberal thinker, due to his "lifelong attempt to define and promote individual liberty" (Reeves, 2007, p. 49). Mill's liberalist views are best described in his publication entitled *On Liberty* (1989).

In *On Liberty (*1989*)* Mill makes the, now famous, statement:

> …the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their

> number, is self protection… the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm (p. 13).

Warburton (2006, p. 143) and many others refer to Mill's statement as "the harm principle". Gray (in Mill, 1998b, p. xv) explains that Mill's harm principle "lays down that no one's liberty may be constrained save to prevent harm to others". Reeves (2005, p. 46) claims that Mill's 'harm principle' has been used in recent times to insight national bans on smoking in public places.

Yet, the harm principle does not protect individuals from harming themselves. Mill (1989) explains:

> …his own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant (to interfere with his liberty of action). He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forebear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right (p. 13).

Mill (*ibid*.) maintains that an individual should be allowed to govern himself because "over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign". Mill (1998a, p. 337) argues that "the business of life is better performed when those who have an immediate interest in it are left to take their own course". This implies that one should know what is best for one's self and should be trusted to act accordingly.

For this reason, according to McDonough and Feinberg (2002, p. 3), Mill argues for "minimum government intervention… allowing it (the government) to control only those necessary features of social life that private citizens would not find profitable to undertake". For example, Mill (1998a, p. 364) states that the government should "build and maintain light houses, establish buoys, etc. for the security of navigation" since he claims that "no one would build lighthouses from the motive of personal interest". One can conclude that Mill would also advocate government control of other public services, such as street lighting and road sweeping.

But how do Mill's liberal views link with his theories of utilitarianism? Riley (1998, p.7) implies that individual liberty is to be used as a means of maximising happiness when he states that Mill's "doctrine of liberty aims to encourage individuality as an element of general utility". Mill (1998b, p. 15) states that "I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being." Gray (in Mill, 1998b, p. xiv) explains that "Mill affirms… that our natures are diverse and complex, so that there is no one form of life, no one set of pleasures, in which we can all find happiness". This suggests that it is Mill's intention that the greatest happiness will be more achievable if individuals have freedom to pursue happiness. Mill's belief that individuals will choose how to live a 'good' life based on what is generally best for humankind is an optimistic one. Warburton (2006, p. 149) describes Mill as "over-optimistic" in assuming that individuals are capable of choosing what's best for them, never mind what's best for everyone else.

In terms of Mill's preferred type of society, Garforth (1980, p. 16) states "Mill had no doubt that it must be a democratic society". Yet, Mill did have some concerns about the match between liberalism and democracy (Dryzek, 2002, p. 9). He worried that even within a democracy the will of the majority might overpower the minority. It was Alexis de Tocqueville who, in the 19th century, first coined the phrase 'tyranny of the majority' to describe the realisation of this problem in America's democratic state. De Tocqueville (1994) explains the problem in the following way:

> A majority taken collectively is only an individual, whose opinions, and frequently whose interest, are opposed to those of another individual, who is styled a minority… I do not think that for the sake of liberty, it is possible to combine several principles in the same government so as really to oppose them to one another. The form of government that is usually termed *mixed* has always appeared to me a mere chimera. Accuraltely speaking, there is no such thing as a *mixed government*, in the sense usually given to the word, because in all communities some one principle of action may be discovered which preponderates over the others (p. 259).

The coming together of liberalism and democracy, and the difficulties that it can present, are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 2.

## Concluding remarks

This chapter outlines three common philosophical perspectives on morality.

A theme that permeates the three perspectives is that of moral responsibility. The three perspectives suggest that it is not enough for individuals to be told how to act or behave in moral situations (although Aristotle, Kant and Mill agree that in some cases this will be necessary). Instead, the ultimate goal is for individuals to think for themselves and to decide the 'right' way to act based upon their observations of others' experiences, their personally selected maxims or their evaluations of what is 'best' for humankind as a whole. But more than this, it is not enough just to think about how to be moral or to consider how one *might* live a moral life, this must be realised in practice.

All perspectives suggest that education is best conceived as a moral endeavour. They suggest that moral education should begin from an early age and that it should be the responsibility of home and school. Teachers are given, by each philosopher, an important role in moral education. It is expected that teachers either naturally possess the necessary virtues/traits for morally educating children or that they will be educated in them themselves. This requirement has implications for the admittance of teachers to the profession and for the standard of their training. Gatherer (2008, p. 894 – 895) claims that Scotland has a reputation for appointing teachers with moral character and purpose. Words such as "respected", "integrity", "powerful role models", "elite", "decent" and

"worthy" are all used to describe the teaching force throughout Scottish history (Gatherer, *ibid*.)

Analysis of the three philosophical perspectives shows the complexity of moral education. For any or all of these perspectives to be adopted as a basis for moral education in schools it seems obvious that teachers require a secure understanding of the perspectives. It is argued that if, in morally educating children, the role of the teacher is as important as Aristotle, Kant and Mill make out then it is crucial that teachers have a philosophical basis for their teaching of moral education and their moral interactions with pupils. A review of teachers' perceptions of moral education and their role as moral educators is conducted in Chapter 3.

Finally, Pring (2001) warns that in the quest for "effectiveness" and with the need to tackle government agendas education becomes more about *appearing* moral, rather than actually *being* moral. He gives the following example:

> Severing educational from moral discourse results in a theory of effectiveness which ignores the question "Effective for what?" But *moral* activities require no justification beyond themselves. "Justice" may be adopted or carefully engineered, as the most effective way of winning support, but it no longer is (though no doubt resembling) the virtue of justice. (p. 102).

In concurrence with Pring (2001), there is a real worry that the teaching of moral education becomes mechanistic and viewed by teachers as something to be

'done'. The next chapter draws upon the three philosophical perspectives to discuss further difficulties and possible ways forward for moral education within a liberal democracy.

## Chapter Two – Moral Education within a Liberal Democracy

This chapter provides an explanation of 'liberal democracy'. Vernon (2001) confirms the difficulty of settling upon an explanation of 'liberal democracy':

> …even those who approve of it *(liberal democracy)* defend it in very different ways, so that it is hard to find a basic account of it that is shared among its supporters, let alone shared between its supporters and its critics (p. 1).

An examination of the features of liberal democracy identifies some difficulties for society and moral education. It is proposed that one of the main challenges that liberal democracy poses for moral education is how it should attend to diverse values and differing conceptions of the 'common good'. The chapter considers the particular diversity of values that can exist between home and school. A difficulty is presented, in that, home is often considered as a private matter whilst school is viewed as a public concern. Finally, an analysis of Rawls theory of 'overlapping consensus' is given and his theory is assessed for its suitability as a means of attending to diversity in values within society and school communities.

## Liberal democracy

### *Liberalism*

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of liberalism through the work of J. S Mill. Kekes (1997, p. 2) explains that liberalism was created as "an alternative to all types of absolute authority". Held (2006) describes the power of absolute authority when he writes about the 'absolutist monarch':

> …absolute rulers proclaimed that they alone held the legitimate right of decisions over state affairs… The absolutist monarch claimed to be the ultimate authority on all matters of human law, although it is important to note that this broad writ was understood to derive from the law of God… The absolutist monarch was at the peak of a system of rule which was progressively centralized and anchored on a claim to supreme and indivisible power: *sovereign power or sovereignty* (p. 56 – 57).

The idea of absolute authority can be likened to the role attributed by Plato in the *Republic* to the Rulers, who according to Warburton (2006, p. 8) "are to have the political power and who make all the important decisions". Citizens have no say in a society governed by an absolute power. According to Kekes (1997, p. 2) liberalism "steadily expanded its opposition to the divine rights of monarchs, to aristocratic privilege derived from feudal times, and then to all forms of oppression…" Hence, liberalism gave citizens a claim to individual rights and to

have a role in decision making, at least as far as decisions about how to live their own lives.

Carr and Hartnett (1996) highlight the individual rights of citizens within a liberal society:

> For liberals, the good society is a society whose members have the right to think, believe and act as they like, provided that they do not prevent others from exercising the same right (p. 47).

Hence, in the quest to move away from absolute power and by giving citizens individual rights "liberalism sought to… define a uniquely private sphere independent of Church and state" (Held, 2006, p. 59). However, the interaction of individuals and their rights begins to complicate the practicability of liberalism and means that a degree of intervention becomes necessary. Further explanation is now given of the need for intervention in a liberal society and of how it is suggested that this be handled.

Halstead (in Carr, 2005, p. 112) further defines the principles of liberalism when he argues that there are three fundamental liberal values, these are:

1. individual liberty (i.e. freedom of action and freedom from constraint in the pursuit of one's own needs and interests);

2. equality of respect for all individuals within the structures and practices of society (i.e. non-discrimination on irrelevant grounds);
3. consistent rationality (i.e. basing decisions and action on logically consistent rational qualifications);

Halstead (*ibid.)* goes on to state that the most conflict exists between values (1) and (2), and that value (3) was created as a result of the conflict between the others. He states that "the interaction between all three values provides the basis for the just resolution of conflict and the rule of law" (*ibid*.).

Hence, in pursuing one's own interests and needs there is a chance that one will act in a way that does not treat others as equals and does not allow them to pursue their own interests and needs. Equally, others' actions might infringe upon one in the same way. In more practical terms, imagine that it is in an individual's interest to drive a car exceedingly fast on a public road. The individual's action creates the risk that others might be seriously injured or even killed, thus jeopardizing the rights of other individuals to pursue their own interests and needs. According to Mill's 'harm principle' there is just cause for intervention to prevent an individual's actions from causing harm to others, although arguably the precise definition of harm is ambiguous (Vernon, 2001, p. 111). Liberals understand that, in order to protect each individual's right to liberty, "the claims of freedom are not unconditional" (Kekes, 1997, p. 6) and that a degree of intervention is required. In the case of the earlier example, intervention is provided in the form of speed limits and their enforcement on public roads.

John Locke, one of the first advocates of the liberal tradition (Held, 2006), recognises the role of government intervention to protect individuals' liberty rights. Warburton (2006) explains that Locke is not in favour of the idea that a government should be all powerful or that citizens should have to blindly obey its commands. Locke insists that citizens should have the right to resist tyranny (Chappell, 1994).

In his *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke writes about a 'state of nature'. Warburton (2006, p. 86) defines a 'state of nature' as "a world with no government-imposed laws and no organised society". On the 'state of nature' Locke (1980) writes:

> The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges everyone: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind… that being all *equal* and *independent*, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possession (p. 9).

For Locke, the 'laws of nature' which govern a 'state of nature' are given by God and since it is supposed, by Locke, that all people are created by God then everyone has a duty to obey the 'laws of nature' (Chappell, 1994). As well as having a duty to *abide by* the 'laws of nature', everyone also has the right to *enforce* the 'laws of nature', as Locke (1980) makes clear:

> …the execution of the law of nature is, in that state, put into everyman's hands, whereby every one has a right to punish the

> transgressors of that law to such a degree, as may hinder its violation: for the *law of nature* would, as all other laws that concern men in this world, be in vain, if there was no body that in the state of nature had a power to execute that law, and thereby preserve the innocent and restrain offenders (p. 9 – 10).

Yet, Warburton (2006) identifies a problem in allowing citizens to enforce the 'laws of nature' and to punish offenders:

> Obviously in the state of nature there would be a danger that individuals would be biased in the ways they upheld the laws of nature. They would tend to promote their own interest under the guise of applying the laws of nature (p. 87).

Locke is aware of this danger. He is also concerned that if an individual is allowed to select the form of punishment for an offender who impinges upon his/her own rights, then the individual might select an unjust punishment out of "self-love… ill nature, passion and revenge" (Locke, 1980, p. 12). Locke proposes that there is a place for the government to intervene to protect society and to promote justice.

Kekes (1997) explains Locke's intention for the government to put laws in place to protect the liberty rights of individuals and to provide a system of justice that citizens can be satisfied with:

> Locke supposed that the means by which the government ought to provide this protection is justice as defined by law. All citizens are equally subject to its authority, and it is reasonable for them to accept it because the law guarantees the rights of individuals to life, liberty and property… Locke's immensely appealing idea is that government ought to be able to justify their authority to the individuals who are their subjects and the only reasonable justification is that the rights of individuals are better protected by the system of justice their government maintains than by what they could hope for under different arrangements (p. 2).

Wringe (2006, p. 143) further qualifies the limits of the laws by stating "the only restrictions the laws are supposed to impose upon us are those that prevent us from harming others and the only burdens are those that can be reasonably defended as being in the vital interests of all". However, in reality, Locke's idea that governments will justify their laws and will only select laws that protect the rights of all individuals, perhaps, isn't enough to satisfy the 'people'. This issue is further discussed in a later section of this chapter on 'Contemporary democracy'.

A further principle of liberalism assumes that people are:

> …atomistic in the sense that each individual is seen as existing in isolation from other individuals… For liberals, society has no existence above or beyond that of individuals and can serve no purpose nor have any interests other than the purposes and

interests of its individual members (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 46).

One can argue that a recent example from the media highlights the way a society can decline when its citizens are primarily concerned only with their own needs and interests. On the 3rd of July 2009, Raimes of the '*Edinburgh Evening News'* reports that "the body of an elderly woman has been found in her city flat after lying undiscovered for up to five years" (Paragraph 1). In her report, Raimes (2009) interviews a number of the elderly woman's neighbours and some local business people. The interviewees claim to have noticed the woman's disappearance, which caused them suspicion, but chose to do nothing about it. Contributors to an online discussion forum featured below the news article (see also Raimes, 2009) attribute responsibility for checking on the woman's welfare to various organizations and individuals including; her neighbours, her bank, the local council, utility companies, the government, her GP and even the local florist! Whether or not one agrees with all of their suggestions, it is apparent that the contributors to this forum feel that 'society' has a responsibility to care for its citizens.

As Mill asserts in connection with 'liberty' and utilitarianism, it is not enough for citizens to have a concern only for their own interests and needs. Citizens' considerations must go beyond whether or not their individual actions are causing harm to anyone in particular. It is argued that there is a need for a greater overall concern for the good of society. Kymlicka (1991) argues for a type of liberalism that takes responsibility for the overall good of society. He writes "the individualism that underlies liberalism isn't valued at the expense of our

social nature or our shared community" (p. 2-3). While Tomasi (2001, P.70) asserts that "people in liberal societies have responsibilities to one another as citizens…" Vernon (2001, p. 116 - 117) explains that through the combination of liberty and utilitarianism Mill intends to promote morality, and more specifically "altruism and a sense of the common good".

Another facet of Mill's work, which emphasises his commitment to the development of social morality, is his 'Religion of Humanity'. Vernon (2001, p. 117) cites Mill's *Utilitarianism* as the first introduction to this concept, in which "Mill wholeheartedly endorses, as a moral project, the idea of a 'religion of humanity' as the binding ethos of progressive society". One of the main ideas of Mill's 'Religion of Humanity' is that individuals will serve humanity (Rader, 2001), i.e., individuals will aim to do what is best for humanity, and not just what is best for themselves. It is argued that Mill's ideas on 'Religion of Humanity', as with some of his ideas on Utilitarianism, conflict with his allegiance to liberalism. Nonetheless, Raeder (2001, p. 15) states that to some extent Mill's hopes for a social morality have been realized. She claims that "All good people are today expected to serve Humanity, to realize 'social justice', to have a 'social conscience' and a concern for 'social problems'".

In Chapter 1 it is suggested, through Aristotle's philosophy, that some individuals have a natural capacity to show concern for the greater good of society, while others need to be 'encouraged'. Again, one may argue that the presence of a government might be useful in this respect. This is not to suggest that the government should pass a law insisting, in the case of the earlier

example, that 'All citizens of a liberal democracy must call in on their elderly neighbours on a regular basis'. It would no doubt be argued that to do so would go against the idea of individual liberty. However, a role for the government is suggested by T. H Green, an influential British philosopher of the 19th century, who encourages a reconsideration of the concepts of 'freedom' and the 'common good' (Carr and Hartnett, 1996):

> For Green, freedom is not to be equated with freedom from state interference but with the opportunity for individuals to develop their human powers and realize their human capacities by contributing to the common good of their society. For Green, the role of the state is to enlarge the opportunities for freedom by providing the social and political conditions under which all individuals are able to realize their capacity to contribute to the common good (p. 51).

Green's perception of the government's role transforms government intervention from a 'negative' to a 'positive' force. In Green's own words (1886):

> …the institutions by which man is moralized, by which he comes to do what he sees that he must, as distinct from what he would like, express a conception of a common good; that through them (the institutions) that conception takes form and reality; and that it is in turn through its presence in the individual that they have a constraining power over him, a power which is not that of mere fear… but which leads him to do what he is not inclined to because there is a law that he

> should… Morality, in the first instance, is the observation of such regulations, and though a higher morality, the morality of the character governed by 'disinterested motives', i.e. by interest in some form of human perfection, comes to differentiate itself from this primitive morality consisting in the observance of rules established for a common good, yet this outward morality is the presupposition of the higher morality (p. 429 – 430).

Like Locke, Green proposes that the government should put laws in place to protect citizens. For Green, the purpose of these laws is to promote morality and protect citizens from immorality. By complying with the laws citizens contribute to the common good of society, and on a higher level, the good of humanity. One could argue that, while concurring with the aims of Mill's 'Religion of Humanity', Green takes away citizens' freedom to choose to do what is best for society and humanity, and not just what is best for them, and instead compels it through government imposed laws. This approach correlates with Kant's account of duty and the need for an individual to obey the law "even though he may not like it" (Kant, 1992, p. 86 - 87). Thomas (1987, p. 41 - 45) confirms Kant's influence on Green's work.

In his *Lecture on Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contact* (in Works of Thomas Hill Green, 1888), Green refers to the factory and school laws as a "great blessing" for children (p. 377). He explains at length how such laws protect children by prohibiting employers and some parents from exploiting them through work. Green infers that the consequence of laws such as these is that

they offer freedom and equal opportunity for all individuals to contribute to the common good of society. For example, by providing education and requiring all children to attend the state creates an equal opportunity for all children to contribute, as citizens, to the common good. These ideas on education and the 'common good' link with conclusions reached at the end of Chapter 1. It is concluded that Aristotle, Kant and Mill aim, through their different conceptions of morality, to encourage citizens to live a 'moral' life with a regard for their fellow citizens. Their philosophies seem to agree that education should be a vehicle for morality. A later section of this chapter explores how education might go about encouraging citizens to foster a wider concern for the good of society within a liberal democracy, particularly when citizens are also entitled to pursue their own interests and needs.

To summarise, according to liberalism, individuals should be left to decide for themselves the best way to live. The role of the government is to provide justice and protection. Ideally, the government will only intervene when individuals or groups are at risk of 'harm' or when their right to liberty is infringed. There is a need for citizens to engender a greater concern for society (and on a wider scale for humanity).

Halstead (in Carr, 2005, p. 114) asserts that "democracy is seen by liberals as the most rational safeguard against tyranny and a way of guaranteeing the equal rights of citizens to determine for themselves what is in their own best interests". This being so, democracy while safeguarding liberal values, might also provide a way for citizens to participate in decision making about how

society is catered for, hence encouraging citizens to take an interest in the greater good of society. The next section of this chapter focuses on the meaning of 'democracy'.

*Democracy -*

One interpretation of democracy is offered by Carr and Hartnett (1996):

> The concept of democracy derives from the Greek words *demos* (the people) and *kratos* (rule), so that to claim that a society is democratic is to claim that, unlike an oligarchy or a monarchy, it is a society in which 'the people rule' (p. 39).

According to Hirst (1988, p. 191) "democracy is a decision procedure and the people use this political mechanism to choose those public actions they want done by government". Participation of 'the people' in this way forms the "conception of the political good", which Held (2006, p. 260) argues is an attractive feature of democracy. Warburton (2004, p. 74) claims that "democracy is often celebrated as a method of giving all citizens a share in political decision making". However, the different types of democracy are numerous and "produce a similarly varied set of effects" (Schmitter and Karl, 1991, p. 76). One effect can be to make decision making more or less participatory for citizens.

Carr and Hartnett (1996) draw a distinction between two types of democracy – 'classical' democracy and 'contemporary' democracy. The name of each type alludes to the time of its conception. Carr and Hartnett (1996, p. 40) explain that

'classical' democracy "has its origins in ancient Greece, where the concept was introduced to describe the emergence of Athens as a political society or *polis*" (for a more detailed review of the origins of 'classical' democracy see Held, 2006, p. 11 – 12). Whilst, 'contemporary' democracy is "a product of twentieth-century political theory and practice" (Carr and Harnett, 1996, p.41). Carr and Harnett, (1996) summarise each type of democracy as follows:

> *'Classical' democracy –*
>
> A democratic society is thus an educative society whose citizens enjoy equal opportunities for self-development, self-fulfillment and self-determination… Democracy is a moral ideal… It requires continuously expanding opportunities for the direct participation of all citizens in public decision-making… Since involvement in the life of the community is a necessary condition of individual development, all should participate in deliberations about the good of their society… It thus requires a society which bureaucratic control over public life is minimal and in which decision-making is not treated as a professional expertise (p. 41).
>
> *'Contemporary' democracy –*
>
> Democracy is not a moral ideal but a value-neutral descriptive concept… Human beings are primarily private individuals who form social relationships in order to satisfy their own personal needs. They thus have no obligation to participate in political decision-making and most ordinary people have no desire to do so. A rigid distinction is, therefore, made between an active

> elite political leadership and the passive majority of ordinary citizens… Democracy flourishes in an individualistic society with a competitive market economy, minimal state intervention, a politically passive citizenry and a strong active political leadership guided by liberal principles and circumscribed by the rule of law (p. 43).

One imagines that these two types of democracy represent opposite ends of a spectrum. The first type of democracy presents an idealistic society, while it is argued that the second type presents a more "realistic" model of our own democracy (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 41). As unsettling as this may be! Evidence given by Sanders et al. (2005), on behalf of The British Election Study, certainly suggests that, in terms of participation in political decision making, British democracy tends more towards a 'contemporary' conception. They report that electoral turnout at general elections in Britain has declined since the 1960s and reached an all time low of 59% in 2001. One reason given for the decline in electoral turnout, particularly with regard to the low turnout in 2001, is that some voters felt that "the outcome of the election was a forgone conclusion and opted not to vote at all" (Sanders et al., 2005, p. 4). This does not mean that British citizens are not interested in political matters or the way that society is governed but more it suggests that they do not feel that their participation is influential.

Another concern about democracy is that of the 'tyranny of the majority'. As Chapter 1 discusses, concerns that tyranny may present itself as a problem within a democracy are raised by Mill (Dryzek, 2002) and de Tocqueville (1994).

In this form tyranny presents itself as a 'tyranny of the majority', rather than the tyranny of a select group of rulers. Carr and Hartnett (1996, p. 49) claim that Mill is mistrustful of the idea that the public should be considered competent enough to participate in decision making or that all members of society should be trusted to use their decision making power to the moral betterment of society. According to Held (2006, p. 85) it is Mill's fear that the views of the wiser and more able citizens will be "overshadowed by the lack of knowledge, skill and experience of the majority". These concerns appear to contradict Mill's earlier optimism about human nature, as well as some of the underpinning principles of his Utilitarianism, as outlined in Chapter 1.

Mill provides solutions to counter his concerns about democracy, one of which is the idea of representative democracy. Mill outlines his proposals for representative democracy in *Considerations on Representative Government* (1862). According to Carr and Hartnett (1996, p. 49), Mill "proposed a modified form of representative democracy constructed so as to ensure that political decisions were only made by the 'right persons'". Mill (1862, p. 80) states that "the ideal type of a perfect government must be representative". He then explains his meaning of representative government:

> …the whole people, or some numerous portion of them, exercise, through their deputies periodically elected by themselves, the ultimate controlling power (p. 97).

Warburton (2004) evaluates representative democracy when he states:

> …representative democracies achieve government by the people in some ways but not in others. They achieve government by the people in so far as those elected have been chosen by the people. Once elected, however, the representatives are not usually bound on particular issues by the wishes of the people (p. 75).

Hirst (1988, p. 190) criticizes representative democracy for this reason and states that "representative democracy as democracy - in fact serves to legitimate modern big government and to restrain it hardly at all". A consequence of representative democracy could be that citizens become disheartened by the process and feel that their participation does not make a real difference, as suggested by a decline in electoral turnout at recent British general elections.

Warburton (2006, p. 116) explains that Rousseau considers governments of this type to be "elective aristocracies" rather than democracies. According to Warburton (*ibid*.), Rousseau classifies a democracy as a "system by which every citizen is entitled to vote on every issue". Rousseau's ideas on democracy more closely resemble the ideals of 'classical' democracy, where by citizens discuss and debate decisions to be made before reaching an agreement on how to proceed (Butler and Ranney, 1994, p. 12). This type of democracy is often termed *direct democracy.* Warburton (2004, p. 75) asserts that the type of democracy that Rousseau favours is only feasible where a smaller population is involved and when "relatively few decision have to be made". Butler and Ranney (1994) add

that various philosophers, including Mill, view this type of democracy as a “dream” and argue that in modern society “it is impossible for all the citizens to meet face to face in the one place” and “it is impossible for all but a handful to spend all their time on politics” (p. 13). In a democracy such as our own, it can be argued that, a representative model is more appropriate.

To continue on large democracies, as democracies of today generally are, Dahl (1967, p. 957) argues that voting is an important mechanism for ensuring equal participation of all citizens in democratic life. He claims that, in modern times, citizens can also participate in democratic life by means such as “reading about politics in the press, listening to the radio, or watching TV”. It is reasonable that in 2010 ‘searching the internet’ should also be added to this list. Presumably, Dahl’s hypothesis is that by participating in such activities citizens will cast a more informed vote that will better represent their own ideals. But Warburton’s claims (2004) suggest that this asks too much of some citizens, who may select representatives based on factors other than the political principles that they represent:

> Many voters aren’t in a position to assess the suitability of a particular candidate. Since they aren’t in a position to assess political policy, they choose their representatives on the basis of non-relevant attributes such as how good looking they are, or whether they have a nice smile. Or else their voting is determined by unexamined prejudices about political parties (p. 76).

In Hirst's view (1988, p. 194) voters "pick parties and people and do not attempt to 'pick' policies or decisions". It is ironic that a lack of confidence in citizens' abilities to participate in political decision making may have led Mill to champion representative democracy, through which one might argue it is easier for said citizens to participate by merely turning up and ticking a box. This, of course, was not Mill's intention. According to Held (2006, p. 86), Mill would want the "wiser and more talented" to be allocated more votes than the "ignorant and less able". Dearlove and Saunders (2000, p. 42) infer that a system of unequal voting has previously been realized in British politics when they write "the second vote enjoyed by university graduates and some businessmen was not abolished until 1948". The core principles of liberal democracy should not permit such a voting system. Hence, in a society where individuals are entitled to an 'equal' vote, the importance of education for democracy for all citizens cannot be overestimated.

Finally, Held (2006, p. 261) argues that another attraction of democracy is that it "does not presuppose agreement on diverse values; rather, it suggests a way of relating values to each other and of leaving the resolutions of value conflicts open to participants in a public process… it does lay down grounds for the defence of a public dialogue and decision-making process about matters of general concern…". It is arguable that these characteristics are what makes democracy appealing to liberals, and hence, provide a justification for the combining of the two.

The next section briefly outlines the introduction of democracy to British society, with particular focus on the development of liberal democracy. It argues that British democracy adopts the principles of representative democracy and should seek to situate itself somewhere between 'classical' and 'contemporary' models.

*Liberal democracy* –

Carr and Hartnett (1996) provide an insightful explanation of the development of liberal democracy in Britain. They assert that in the 18th century British society adopted a form of democracy that was "very different from the 'classical' conception" (p. 46). They claim that the appeal of this new type of democracy was "not that it promoted a desirable version of the good society but rather that it offered a system of government which would allow an already established view of the good society – the liberal society – to work" (*ibid*.).

As discussed, the liberal society is based on the principles that individuals are entitled to pursue their own interests and desires, as long as they do not prevent others from doing the same. The reformation of democracy to suit this type of society would ultimately lead to a highly individualized and egotistic society (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 46). An example of the way in which a society can decline when its citizens are primarily concerned only with their own needs and interests is given in the section on liberalism.

Carr and Hartnett (1996) imply that the altering of democracy to suit society, as happened in Britain in the 18th century, has led to many different conceptions of

'liberal democracy' over time, with some versions leaning more towards a 'contemporary' conception and others a more 'classical' one. They explain that by the end of the nineteenth century the state had taken more power and "it was clearly necessary to rethink the liberal concept of freedom and the liberal theory of the state" (p. 51). Dearlove and Saunders (2000) explain that it was at around this time that 'the people' (some, but not all) gained more power through increased voting rights and that, as a result, "the liberal state was democratized towards the end of the nineteenth century" (p. 51).

According to Held (2006, p. 59), "most liberal and liberal democratic theory has been faced with the dilemma of finding a balance between might and right, power and law, duties and rights". He states that liberal societies in the West were no different and explains that the 'balance' refers to that of state power on one side with the rights and duties of individuals on the other. To clarify – in order to safeguard liberal values the state must have some power but must not be too interfering (as that in itself would compromise the right to liberty), whilst individuals must have the freedom to pursue their own interests and needs but must be accountable if they prevent anyone one else from doing the same. It could be argued that, in this type of society, neither the state nor the individual should have too much power but, at the same time, one must have some power over the other. It is through his recommendations on representative government that Mill (1862) tries to resolve this dilemma. Held (2006, p. 91) asserts that Mill's account of representative democracy "makes government accountable to the citizenry and creates wiser citizens capable of pursuing the public interest". Although at the time, Mill's precise conception of representative democracy was

resisted (Urbinati, 2002, p. 5), Held (*ibid*.) confirms that the popularity and acceptance of liberal representative democracy has greatly escalated in modern times. He writes "it was only in the closing decades of that century (the twentieth century) that liberal representative democracy was securely established in the West" (p. 91). It can be concluded that Mill, through his theories of liberty, utilitarianism and representative democracy, has been an influential figure in the formation of liberal democracy.

Dewey's views are also worth considering. According to Carr and Hartnett (1996):

> Dewey refused to accept that the failure of western liberal democracies to live up to classical democratic ideals meant that democracy had to be redefined so as to bring it into line with contemporary political reality. What it meant was that political reality had to be changed so as to bring it in line with classic democratic ideals (p. 54).

Thus, Dewey aims to more closely align liberal democracy with the 'classical' conception of democracy. He believes that, contrary to some claims, the public should be deemed capable of participating in democratic life and according to Carr and Hartnett (1996, p. 55) "that widespread public participation in all aspects of political and social life is desirable". This is not to say that Dewey is opposed to representative democracy (Fott, 1998, p. 36). Rather, it is Dewey's hope that citizens will participate in the careful selection of representatives and, in doing so, will provide representatives with "a locus of action within which

they are to formulate intelligent plans that meet the needs of their constituents" (Kaufman-Osborn in Tiles, 1992, p. 249). For Dewey, the best way to prepare 'the people' for participation in democratic life is through education. He forms his proposals for education in his famous work '*Democracy and Education*' (1916). Dewey (1916) argues that education should not merely be a preparation for life in a democracy. Instead, education itself should take the form of a democracy and should afford pupils their right to participate in the democratic life of the school.

In the political sphere, Dewey calls for a re-evaluation of liberal values and ideals, in order to allow modern day liberal democracies to move forward. According to Fott (1998, p. 37), "the heart of Dewey's political project is to retain the essential features of liberalism while removing them from their individualistic base. This means recasting our understanding of the place of individual rights in liberalism". Dewey (1935, p. 225) argues that individualistic liberalism is "an outgrowth" of circumstances in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Dewey's call for a move away from a more individualized version of liberalism highlights his concern for the social nature of humanity. In the following passage, Dewey (1935) asserts that the individualized concept of liberalism is lacking in its assumption that humans come into the world ready to decide for themselves what the 'good' life is:

> This lack is expressed in the conception of individual as something given, complete in itself, and of liberty as a ready

> made possession of the individual, only needing the removal of external restrictions in order to manifest itself (p. 226).

Like T. H Green, Dewey argues that society, and hence the state, help rather than hinder individuals. Carr and Hartnett (1996, p. 59) suggest that for Dewey, "the 'individual' and 'society' are neither separate nor distinct". Dewey (1935) is aware that the conditions of society impact upon the development of individuality. Fott (1998, p. 32) speaks of this as an "interdependence" between public and private spheres, which Dewey does not want us to forget. Dewey (1935, p. 227) proposes that society and the individual should be "as much interested in the positive construction of favourable institutions, legal, political, and economic, as it is in the work of removing abuses and over oppressions". By taking an interest, individuals shape their society and gain increasing freedom to form their own individuality. Boisvert (1998) explains Dewey's ideas on freedom further:

> Autonomy as a model for freedom leads in practice to separation from others, not towards democratic community… Marriage, school, trade associations, social organizations, political groups, athletic leagues and labor unions all provide opportunities for increasing one's freedom. They allow us to move concretely towards accomplishments which would not be possible outside of such relations (p. 64 – 65).

Carr and Hartnett (1996, p. 60) suggest that, in looking at democracy as an opportunity for individuals to collectively shape society and develop

themselves, Dewey does not see "simply a political mechanism or a set of individual rights". It is in this way that Dewey attempts to shift liberal democracy towards a more 'classical' conception. He reaffirms liberal democracy as a community within which citizens participate to co-construct a conception of the 'common good' for their society.

To conclude, Vernon (2001, p. 4) states that "the very idea of liberal democracy is quite often seen as self contradictory or paradoxical". The paradox of liberal democracy is further explained by Dearlove and Saunders (2000):

> Liberalism is about *what* governments should but mainly should not do, whereas democracy is about *how* governments should go about their business and be controlled by 'the people'. The problem is that the *ends* of liberalism are not guaranteed by the *means* of democracy since a tyranny of the majority can pose a challenge to individual liberties and the free market. Liberals are not democrats (democracy is simply the best of a bad governmental bunch)… (p. 54).

Nevertheless, Dryzek (2002, p. 9) confirms that liberal democracy has become "the world's dominant political ideology". This chapter shows that the concept of liberal democracy over time has been formed and reformed. Societies throughout the world, including British society, have 'stuck with' liberal democracy. Thus, for all that liberal democracy may have going against it, it would appear that most would agree that it offers the most acceptable approach from those available. From the explanation of liberal democracy set out in this

chapter, it is argued that the particular conceptions adopted for both liberalism and democracy can make the marriage more or less successful.

Finally, it is argued that modern society presents some challenges for liberal democracy. One challenge being an increased population, which makes it extremely difficult if not impossible, for all citizens to participate in open and full discussions on matters concerning them. Representative government can help with this but one can see how easily a democracy might shift towards a 'contemporary' conception. This thesis argues that our liberal democracy, while adopting the form of representative government to tackle the challenges of modern society, should seek to situate itself somewhere between 'classical' and 'contemporary' models. As inferred by Mill, Green and Dewey, a liberal democracy should maintain moral ideals and should form a moral community. While the pursuit of these ideals might put added pressure on citizens and the state, and although a collective conception of the 'common good' might not be easy, it is argued that these difficulties are worth confronting. This chapter continues on the assumption that the type of liberal democracy described is worth pursuing.

One of the main challenges that moral education faces in light of the principles of liberal democracy is now examined. It is argued that the diversity of values that exist within a liberal democracy, while themselves a positive facet, create challenging circumstances for the formation of a collective conception of the 'common good'. This challenge and its implications are referred to throughout this thesis as the 'liberal democratic problem'.

Diversity of values and differing conceptions of the 'common good' – the Liberal Democratic problem

Halstead (in Halstead and Taylor, 1996) explains that there are various different definitions of the term 'values'. For the purpose of his work, Halstead (*ibid*) defines values as:

> …principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as points of reference in decision making or the evaluation of beliefs or action and which are closely connected to personal integrity and personal identity (p. 5).

This definition of 'values' is not without criticism. Some might complain that Halstead's definition "treats values as a kind of possession, something which people have" (Halstead, *ibid*.). One argues that the nature of values makes them difficult to define, since they cannot be seen, touched or easily measured. Hecther (1993 cited in Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004) refers to these limitations as impediments in the study of values. It is proposed that, although Halstead's definition might not be acceptable to everyone, for the purpose and scope of this thesis it is appropriate. The thesis continues on the premise that:

- values are something that are acquired and developed by an individual,
- values represent an important facet of an individual's character,
- values can be either positive or negative,

- values are used by an individual (sometimes unconsciously) as a basis for his/her actions and attitudes.

These descriptions of values relate to an individual's personal values. It is important to remember that, as shown in the previous sections on liberal democracy, each individual's attitudes, interests, desires and values do not only affect that individual. Haydon (2006, p. 61) asserts that the nature of moral values means that individuals do not only feel that their moral values are important for them, but for everyone. For example, if an individual values honesty then it is likely that he/she will try to always tell the truth and will expect others to do the same. Similarly, expectations are placed upon that individual by the moral values of others. Thus, it is argued that an individual's personal values affect and are affected by society.

Carr (2003, p. 69) draws a distinction between two types of values; these are "the 'personal' moral or other values to which people are entitled as individual agents, and more common 'core' values in default of which, it might be said, civil social order could hardly be sustained". Hence, the definition of values accepted for this thesis will be extended to include the following assumptions:

- values are something that are acquired and developed by society,
- values represent principles that are deemed important to and by society,
- values are used by society as a basis for decision making and to sustain order.

These descriptions of values relate to society's core values. Gutmann (1993, p. 1) states that in trying to reconcile the two types of values, which she refers to as the values of individual freedom and civic virtue, a "profound problem" is posed for society, and consequently for education. This chapter argues that one of the main challenges of liberal democracy is to determine a means of pursuing the 'common good', which draws upon 'core' values of society. A conception of the 'common good' in itself is difficult to determine, since individuals are entitled to foster diverse 'personal' values. Cassidy (2007, p. 15) confirms that a difficulty occurs when individuals' moral codes are brought together in society since we "are not in a society of one" and "not everyone's moral codes will concur".

The next section of this chapter examines the difficulties that schools, like society, face in the coming together of the values and moral codes that their community members bring. It is argued that without a means of attending to values and the 'common good' the way forward for moral education remains unclear.

*The Liberal Democratic Problem for Moral Education –*

Firstly, attention must be drawn to the use of the term 'education'. In Chapter 1 it is concluded that education should primarily be conceived as a moral endeavour. On this assumption, the remainder of this chapter uses the term 'education' to refer to the moral content of education as a whole, including

‘moral education’ as an area of the formal curriculum and as an underpinning element of the hidden curriculum.

McLaughlin (in McDonough and Feinberg, 2002) asserts that, while all schools face difficulties, schools in liberal democratic societies face particular challenges due to “the complex principles, values, and practices which articulate and underpin societies of this kind” (p. 121). The task of education is made more difficult for schools in liberal democratic societies, since it is not always clear how schools should attend to values or which values they should attend to.

According to Gutmann (1993), in choosing how to attend to values, education might either tend towards individual freedom or civic virtue:

> Either we must educate children so that they are free to choose among the widest range of lives because freedom of choice is the paramount good, or we must educate children so that they will choose *the* life that is best because a rightly-ordered soul is the paramount good. Let children define their own identity or let society define it for them. Give children liberty or give them virtue (p. 3).

This dilemma is one part of what this thesis calls the ‘liberal democratic problem’. It is argued that schools and teachers (as moral educators) often feel that they are faced with the dilemma of choosing to *tell* children which values to foster or leave children to go it alone to determine their own values. In Chapter 3, a review of research seeks to determine teachers’ perceptions of moral

education and their views on their responsibilities as moral educators. For now, it is surmised that in feeling that they must make a choice, schools and teachers might decide to either avoid the matter altogether or select values to touch upon in a non-committal way. Haydon (1995, p. 53) states that it is sometimes assumed that common moral education must remain "thin" when it is carried out within the context of a liberal democratic society. This thesis argues that to teach moral education in a way that makes it 'thin' succeeds in making it meaningless. It is suggested that the choices listed above are not the only ones for schools and teachers. Later in this chapter options are explored, for both society and education, for attending to values in a liberal democracy.

In terms of which values schools should attend to, Callan (1995) implies that they do at least have an obligation to attend to core values. He argues that all schools within a liberal democratic society require some form of common education, and explains that common education "prescribes a range of educational outcomes- virtues, abilities, different kinds of knowledge--as desirable for all members of the society to which the conception applies" (p. 252). In other words, common education attends to core values. Callan (1995, p. 254) defends the need for some form of common education in all schooling by claiming that it is justified by "the need to secure a sufficiently coherent and decent political culture and the prerequisites of a stable social and economic order". From a moral perspective, one suggests that what Callan (1995) refers to is common education for the 'common good' of society.

Both McLaughlin (in McDonough and Feinberg, 2002) and Callan (1995) have affirmed that education within liberal democratic societies requires some concern for the values that society finds important. Yet, the difficulty remains in determining core values in a society of such diversity. This difficulty constitutes the other part of what this thesis calls the 'liberal democratic problem'.

Despite the range of values represented by society, Carr (2003) implies that, to some extent, schools might find determining core values easier than expected:

> On the face of it, it is difficult to see not just how any civilized human association whatsoever could continue without some basic recognition that it is wrong to lie, to steal, to bully, to discriminate against on other grounds of gender, race or physical handicap, and so on, but also how any school – as a particular human social institution – could itself proceed effectively in the absence of such basic moral consensus (p. 70).

This suggests that there are some values to which we would all subscribe. This being true, it would seem appropriate to class such values as 'core' values of society. Nonetheless, it can be argued that there might be just as many values that, many but not all, citizens would uphold as important for maintaining order and stability in society (or just simply for their own sake). Should these values be dismissed because they are not shared by everyone, or accepted because they are shared by many? It seems that the criteria that society and education use to determine core values are crucial. Callan (1991, p. 66) confirms that education risks under representing or even offending the values of minority

groups if it advances with “a single scheme of values or way of life at odds with the cultural diversity of those whom it purports to serve”. This risk coincides with the problem of the ‘tyranny of the majority’, as first recognised by De Tocqueville (1994, p. 259).

For these and other reasons, government and schools might be tempted towards neutralist liberalism, in an attempt to avoid values conflicts. However, this may lead to moral relativism. Warburton (2004) describes the principles of moral relativism:

> Moral judgements can only be judged true or false relative to a particular society. There are no absolute moral judgements: they are all relative. Moral relativism contrasts starkly with the view that some actions are absolutely right or wrong… (p. 62).

Many argue that to avoid moral relativism there has to be some core values which we all simply should subscribe (Noddings, 2003; Bennett, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1999). Otherwise, it might be argued that the whole enterprise of moral education seems hopeless.

Carr (2003) suggests that it is unlikely that any school could function without assimilating some basic values. Teachers may be able to identify the values that they think are important for their pupils to develop (Veugelers, 2000) and that are important for “the functioning of school as a learning organization” (Veugelers and Vedder, 2003, p. 379). Warnock (in Halstead and Taylor, 1996, p. 45) claims that “most parents, whatever their cultural background, want their

children to be taught to behave well in social situations", implying that consensus could be reached on, at least, basic values. However, to assume that the problem is solved by reaching a consensus on basic values alone is not enough (and even dangerous based on the concerns about the 'tyranny of the majority). As Haydon (2006, p. 61) implies the nature of moral values means that they are something which people care about and have strong feelings towards. It is likely that anyone who has an interest in education, and more specifically in its aims and outcomes, will possess strong feelings about the desirable qualities and values it should hope to engender in children.

Consensus on these values looks to be much more difficult. Halstead (in Halstead and Taylor, 1996) asserts:

> Many groups within society have a legitimate claim to a stake in the educational process – parents, employers, politicians, local communities, leaders of industry and tax payers, as well as teachers and children themselves – and within each of these groups there is a wide diversity of political, social, economic, religious, ideological and cultural values. The expectations of interested parties are thus often in conflict, and school sometimes become the battleground where groups with different value priorities vie for influence and domination (p. 3).

Carr and Hartnett (1996, p. 187) point out that the nature of a democratic state means that everyone is entitled to "debate the specific education policies"

through which the aims of education are determined. One suggests that this entitlement extends to having a say in which values underpin the educational policies of schools. Again, schools face being in a difficult position, which they do not have the liberty to opt out of.

Before exploring options for attending to values, the next section of this chapter further examines the interaction of two important value domains in education; these are the values of home and the values of school.

*Moral education in the home and school*

In discussing the values of home and the values of school it is not supposed that the two will always be in conflict. However, this section considers the difficulties that can present themselves when conflict does arise. The section establishes that it is important to find a way of dealing with conflict due to the influence that both home and school have on children's developing values.

Throughout this section the terms 'family' and 'home' are used. The debate surrounding the definition of 'family' is extensive and would undoubtedly allow for an entire thesis itself. However, the scope of this thesis neither allows nor requires the debate to be entered into. Rather, when referring to the values of 'family' or 'home' it is assumed that these are the values that are transmitted to and/or developed by a child out with school. It is taken for granted that children's values can be influenced by people in their lives who they do not live with.

Few would dispute that children's values are most heavily influenced by their family and their life at home. Halstead (1999, p. 266) confirms the superiority of the family's influence when he states "families are not the *only* influence on children's values, but they are usually the *first*". Schools follow closely behind as "the most important vehicle next to the family" (Reich in McDonough and Feinberg, 2002, p. 299). One suggests that, at times, educators might prefer the balance to tip in their favour.

Regardless of who has the most influence, it can be argued that both home and school can influence children's values without being aware of it. Quinton (in Haldane, 2004, p. 36) explains that the teaching of values both at home and at school is not always intentional or planned for. He writes "much of it will come from parents and other adults or contemporaries whose activities may be observed and imitated… One can learn from someone who has no idea that one is watching". Halstead (in Halstead and Taylor, 1996, p. 3 – 4) asserts that teachers communicate values (often without knowing) in the way they choose to organise their class, the expectations that they set and the responses that they give to their pupils. Halstead (ibid, p. 4) warns that, for this reason, there is a chance that children will acquire values "haphazardly" if schools are not clear about the values that they wish to communicate. As mentioned, Chapter 3 examines teachers' views on their responsibilities as moral educators and also considers parents' perceptions of the teacher's role.

The idea that values are transmitted by the unwitting actions of others has many implications, not only for teachers, but for parents and any other important

figures in a child's life. It could be argued that, while not necessarily being aware of the precise influence of their actions, the majority of parents and other family members recognise that what they say and do can affect the person that a child becomes. Callan (1997b, p. 223) declares that "parents hope to rear children who will possess certain prized skills and virtues, or who will live by a certain religious creed or sustain a cherished ethnic identity". To apply this view to all parents might seem overly optimistic of Callan (*ibid*.) but actually it is difficult to refute. While in some cases it might be a challenge to identify, even vaguely, what is being taught in terms of moral education; it is argued that all parents provide moral education of a sort to their children. For example, the parent who shows pride in her child when he masters the ability to take items from a shop without being caught teaches something about morality. Wringe (1994) confirms that not all families teach lessons on morality that are positive. He maintains that "not only valuable knowledge and desirable values may be passed down via the family" (p. 81). Arguably, this type of education might be better termed 'immoral education', since its aims and outcomes are at odds with what would generally be considered desirable.

According to Wringe (*ibid*.), when education of this type occurs in a child's home life, educators face "all but insuperable barriers in ideas, values and attitudes passed down from father to son and mother to daughter". Evidence provided by Passy (1999) might suggest that there is little hope for educators to ever overcome these barriers. In her research, Passy (1999) studied the correlation between the values that a group of children brought with them to school and the values of their teacher. Although on a small scale, her findings

indicated that despite the teacher being sure of the values that she wished to communicate and making an effort to communicate them, the children took "little conscious notice… of her values unless they coincided with their own". This finding might simply reflect the quality of the relationship that those particular children had with their teacher, or it might succeed in emphasising the influence and lasting impact of values transmitted at home.

If teachers are unable to influence the values that children learn at home when they conflict with their own values or the values of school, then it seems futile to even attempt to do so. Yet, Wringe (1994, p. 77) implies that teachers' responsibilities as moral educators means that they "can no longer avoid having and communicating views about the family and so-called family values". As stated, it is not suggested that school values and family values are always in conflict. There is no reason to think that Wringe (*ibid*.) meant to suggest that teachers will only communicate negative views about pupils' families or their family values. Nevertheless, Halstead (1999, p. 266) advises that "there may be occasions… when the values of children from different families are incompatible or when schools consider it inappropriate to respect or reinforce the values children have learned at home". It is argued that, on these occasions, schools need to know if they have the right to do anything about the values that a child is learning at home.

But it is not only the rights of the school that need be considered. Halstead (1999) identifies the different rights that must be respected when dealing with a conflict of values between home and school:

> So if conflict occurs, how should a balance be found between the right of families to initiate their children into their own moral values (especially if these vary significantly from family to family), the right of schools to teach the 'shared' values of the broader society (especially if these values are not actually shared by *all* groups in the society), and the right of the children to develop into autonomous agents (especially if autonomy is not recognised as an important values by the child's family)? (p. 267)

In asserting that a 'balance' should be sought, Halstead (*ibid*.) implies that the rights of the family, the school and the child are equal on the matter of values. One wonders if this is the case and questions if, out of the family, the school and the child, any one can always be considered to know best or to know what a 'balance' is.

It is acknowledged that children have the right to develop as autonomous agents, exercising their own values. As Archard (2004, p. 176) states, parents have the right to pass on their values and beliefs to their child, but the child must still be entitled to choose "a different life for himself if he so decides". Presumably, the same can be said of the values passed on by schools.

Schoeman (1980, p.12) reveals that history has allowed children to be considered the property of their parents. He apprehensively explains that this view of children as 'products' or something to be owned has, previously, led to the

assumption that parents should be granted the right to decide what is best for their children. Many would now refute the notion of children as property, including Archard (2004, p. 176) who asserts that it is unacceptable to consider a child as "an extension, a part or a product of the parent". Nevertheless, the idea that parents are bound by obligation and concern for their own child might prove useful. According to Hobson (1984), it is the bond between a parent and his/her child that (generally) puts the parent in a privileged position to decide what is best:

> (Parents) are the ones most likely to best promote the welfare of their children. It is the parents who have the most direct interest in their children's welfare and the parent-child bonds of affection are more likely to ensure the continuous care and attention needed, even under the most difficult of circumstances (p. 64).

If Hobson (ibid.) is correct then it is to be assumed that parents are in the best position to make decisions in their children's interest. However, it does not necessarily follow that they are the best equipped to make such decisions. Halstead (1999, p. 272) points out that, unlike teachers, most parents are not professionally trained to make decisions for and about their children and, consequently, they often base decisions about their child's upbringing on their own upbringing. Clearly, Halstead (ibid.) does not believe that this is always the best option and recommends that "parents may have much to learn from schools".

It can be contended that schools and teachers, through the nature of their vocation, are inclined to want the best for their pupils. This inclination coupled with the professional training of teachers might suggest that schools are fit to make decisions about their pupils' best interests. Carr (2003, p. 73) explains that traditionally schools and teachers have been regarded as "perhaps the principal agencies of moral formation in society – in a way that goes beyond mere accountability to current social trends or parental predilections". He shows support, to some extent, for this attitude when he argues that "there are surely at least some circumstances in which we do or should want to say that (good) schools or teachers know better than others what is morally best for young people, and should not merely be pandering to dubious parental aspirations and ambitions". This argument implies that, while parents might have the right to promote the specific values and beliefs that they hold dear and that they determine are in their child's best interest, schools should be afforded some authority when it comes to knowing what's best for the child as a citizen of society. In the broader sense of liberal democracy, one can compare the rights of the family with rights of the individual, and the duties of the school with the duties of the state. The distinction between 'public' and 'private' morality is relevant here.

*Private and Public Morality* –

It has been asserted that, in times of moral crisis, the government, the media and the public take an increased interest in the kind of values that are promoted by education (see Carr in Bryce and Hume, 2003, p. 323). One argues that, when

viewed as a solution, education can become a panacea for correcting all of the ills of society. According to Haydon (2006, p. 24), when society looks to education to promote and develop morality it treats morality as "a matter of public rather than private concern". If education is seen as a public concern then it follows that everyone is entitled to a say in it. The family, on the other hand, is generally considered a private matter with only some limits on the values that they can promote and live by. Archard (2004) explains that families are afforded autonomy and privacy on the matter of values:

> …parents, that is those accorded responsibility in the first instance for the welfare of particular children, are entitled, subject to standard conditions, to autonomy and privacy. Autonomy here means the freedom to bring up children as they see fit; privacy means the absent of unconsented intrusion upon the family's domain (p. 154).

Hence, if the family is considered a private concern then it follows that the values and preferences that it promotes are not open to public scrutiny.

To return to the idea of personal values and core values, it would seem that the distinction between public and private suggests that while families are entitled to play a part in determining the core values promoted by schools, schools have less entitlement to influence the personal values or preferences encouraged at home. This suggests that schools should only involve themselves in developing children's core values. This implies that an individual, or child in this context, can easily be divided into two separate parts – being a citizen of society with

shared values on one side, and a private individual with personal values on the other.

Haydon (2006) suggests that it is not helpful to think about the development of the individual as a person and the development of an individual as a citizen as separate:

> If we had to make a choice, say, between on the one hand developing in people the capacities that will enable them (individually) to lead fulfilling lives, and on the other hand giving them the skills and attitudes that will equip them to be efficient cogs in an impersonal machine, then there would be a real divide between aiming at the good of the individual and aiming at the good of society (p. 23 – 24).

In terms of what separating the values means for the individual, Callan (1997b, p. 221) implies that the values pupils learn at home and the values they learn at school must interact for them to make any sense or to have any meaning. In practice, it is difficult to imagine that the two types of values wouldn't crossover and impact upon one another. For example, there is little doubt that educators would desire families to promote core values at home. It is also likely that teachers, at some point, will have cause to discuss children's personal values with them. While some parents might worry that the education school gives their children might "succeed only in unraveling the good work that they have done" (Haydon, 1995, p. 54), it is proposed that school provides an opportunity

for children to reflect on and review their personal values. On the opportunities that schools provide Passy (1999) asserts:

> As a general rule, the school provides a child's first experience of large groups of people, all of whom have varied experience of family life. It is also where children are taught by people with no family connection, and where they have access to different ideas about the family in a formal situation (p. 21).

It should not be assumed that in providing these experiences children will necessarily reject their family values. Conversely, one argues that a pupil's own family values might be affirmed when they are understood in relation to others' family values. Either way in providing the opportunity for children to encounter the private values or preferences of other families and the personal values of other individuals, schools might have found a non-interfering way of accessing the private values sphere. Halstead (1999) confirms that there is an appropriate way for schools to approach private values with children:

> In so far as schools concern themselves with private values, they should adopt a neutral stance: children need to be taught *about* private values, and preferably about a wide variety of private values, so that autonomous choice between alternatives becomes a real possibility (p. 276).

Perhaps some liberals would object to schools involving themselves in the private values sphere. Crittenden (in Halstead and McLaughlin, 1999, p. 51)

counters such an objection when he claims that "a pluralist liberal democracy entails a commitment to a certain range of moral values and requires decisions that blur the distinction between public and private sphere of morality". If school can be considered "a microcosm of society" (Warnock in Halstead and Taylor, 1996, p. 49) then it follows that there must be a blurring of the public and private spheres of morality there too.

Still it is inevitable that conflict between home and school will arise. In *'The Significance of Common Culture'*, Scruton (1979, p. 69) argues that "a man's culture… determines what he is, what he feels, what he does and how he sees himself". It can be inferred that a person's culture is a key part of his/her morality. Scruton (1979) also asserts that "culture is essentially something shared" (p. 52) and that "different members of society may under certain conditions be said to partake of a 'common culture'" (p. 51). It is suggested that the members of a school community share something of a 'common culture', which their morality is bound up in. In Chapter 5 the concept of 'common culture' is revisited. The chapter also introduces and examines one possible approach to moral education that might prove successful in helping schools to penetrate the common culture of their community.

The beginning of the section states that often society looks to education to solve its moral problems. However, education and schools have moral problems of their own. Pring (in Cairns et al, 2000, p. 107) claims that disagreement over values in schools "reflects disagreement on a wider societal level". This being true, it is suggested that rather than society turning to education to solve its

moral dilemmas, education might turn to society. The next section considers how society might work towards defining its core values and forming a conception of the common good. The approaches suggested for society are considered as options for education and schools.

*Attending to Society's Values*

This chapter introduces the idea that a collective conception of the common good for society is difficult to establish. Yet, it is argued that a concern for and commitment to the common good is valuable and worth pursuing. Gutmann (1993, p. 2) criticizes "comprehensive" conceptions of the common good, which impose ideals and values upon citizens. However, she states that to say nothing of the common good is to "forego the virtues essential to creating and maintaining a good society" (p. 3). The same dilemma is identified for schools, supporting Pring's claim (in Cairns et al, 2000) that the value dilemmas that schools face mirror society's dilemmas.

Gutmann (1993, p. 3 - 4) provides an alternative option that allows for a flexible and adaptable conception of the common good with her theory of "conscious social reproduction". She argues that rather than leaving citizens to figure out for themselves or dictating to citizens what the common good is, citizens should be given the opportunity to collectively reproduce the common good. It is clear that Gutmann's theory of 'conscious social reproduction' draws heavily upon Dewey's social philosophy of liberal democracy. Like Dewey, Gutmann (1993) strongly supports the idea that neither individual freedom nor the concept of

the 'common good' are given, but rather they are formed through an interaction between the individual and society. It follows that individuals must be entitled to express their views on the values and ideals that contribute to the common good of society, just as everyone is entitled to contribute their views on the values that should underpin education (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 187).

The features of a liberal democracy would seem to offer citizens the opportunity to contribute to the reproduction of the common good. Vernon (2001, p. 72) confirms that democracy gives citizens a chance to have their say but warns that "no democracy, however ideal, can hope to accommodate differences entirely". While some differences will remain, Carr (2003, p. 180 - 181) suggests that "it may be necessary in contexts of serious value conflict to accept that democratic consensus must prevail in the greater interests of social harmony and security".

This section explores the idea of consensus as a means of attending to value differences and conflicts. Arguably, one of the most important and well known theories of consensus is 'The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus', introduced and developed by John Rawls in '*Political Liberalism*' (1993, 2005). In '*Political Liberalism*' (2005) Rawls is concerned with the following question:

> How is it possible that there can be a stable and just society whose free and equal citizens are deeply divided by conflicting and even incommensurable religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines? (p. 133).

Firstly, Rawls (2005, p. 35) is concerned that there is a need for a "well ordered society", as highlighted by his reference to justice and stability. In his earlier work, '*A Theory of Justice*' (1972), Rawls determines that there are two principles to which we can all agree are necessary for a well ordered society, these are the principles of justice and liberty (Warburton, 2006, p. 242). According to Audard (2007, p. 6), for Rawls justice "does not mean the institution of civil and criminal justice, but the *virtue* of justice". In this way, justice refers to fairness. The principles of justice and liberty are reflected in Rawls' question in his reference to 'free and equal citizens'. Rawls (2005, p. 135) suggests that justice can be interpreted in a way that assumes that "there are many conflicting reasonable comprehensive doctrines with their conceptions of the good". It can be surmised that what Rawls refers to by 'doctrines' are the value or belief systems that constitute the good life for different individuals, groups, cultures, religions, etc. These doctrines relate to the personal morality of individuals or the private sphere of morality. Yet, Rawls (1993, p. 139) asserts that while individuals are entitled to develop their own conceptions of the good, or in his words form a "comprehensive doctrine", it would not be reasonable for an individual to impose that conception or doctrine on everyone else. Instead, it is necessary for society to determine a "political conception of justice" (Rawls, 2005, p. 142) that will ensure a well ordered society. A 'political conception of justice' is similar to what is known by this chapter as 'a conception of the common good'. According to Rawls (2005, p. 137) "only a political conception of justice that all citizens might be reasonably expected to endorse can serve as a basis of public reason and justification". Of course, a political conception of justice, like a conception of the common good, is difficult to determine due to the diverse and conflicting

values that exist in society. Rawls (2005, p. 139) is concerned about how society can determine "political values", which he explains "govern the basic framework of social life – the very groundwork of our existence – and specify the fundamental terms of political and social cooperation". This description of political values correlates with what is said of 'core' values. Rawls assumes that it is possible to determine society's political values with his '*Idea of Overlapping Consensus*'.

In Audard's words (2007):

> An overlapping consensus is a state of equilibrium… It is *moral* in the specific sense that it is based on people's autonomy and on their own interpretation and acceptance of political norms. It is *political* in the sense that it separates the realm of personal beliefs from that of public deliberation and decision. It tries to model an agreement that is respectful of irreducible differences: citizens all affirm the same political conception of justice, but not necessarily for the same reasons (p. 197).

Audard (*ibid*.) explains that an overlapping consensus is an agreement. It must be clarified, however, that Rawls does not propose that through an overlapping consensus people should compromise on or be forced into accepting values (Freeman, 2003, p. 36). Winch (in Carr, 2005, p. 67) confirms that using "persuasion and compromise" to reach an agreement on shared values isn't a solution. This is because "moral values partly constitute a person's identity and

core of their personality, they are not something that can be negotiated away" (Winch, *ibid*.).

Rather, Rawls (2005, p. 157) suggests that an overlapping consensus can be founded on virtues that all reasonable persons can accept without jeopardizing their personal values or the comprehensive doctrines that their other values are based on, e.g., their religious values. It is through the acceptance of virtues that a political conception of justice, or a conception of the common good, can be maintained. Rawls (*ibid*.) expresses his ideas on virtues in the following passage:

> I mean, for example, the virtues of tolerance and being ready to meet others halfway, and the virtues of reasonableness and the sense of fairness. When these virtues are widespread in society and sustain its political conception of justice, they constitute a very great public good, part of society's political capital. Thus, the values that conflict with the political conception of justice and its sustaining virtues may be normally outweighed because they come into conflict with the very conditions that make fair social cooperation possible on a footing of mutual respect. The other reason political values normally win out is that severe conflicts with other values are much reduced. This is because when an overlapping consensus supports the political conception, this conception is not viewed as incompatible with basic religious, philosophical and moral values. We need not consider the claims of political justice against the claims of this or that comprehensive view; nor need we say that political values are intrinsically more important than other values and

> that is why the latter are overridden. Having to say that is just what we hope to avoid, and achieving overlapping consensus enables us to do so (p. 157).

It must be emphasised that Rawls does not suggest that virtues should be forced upon individuals. Instead, Rawls (2005, p. 156) proposes that reasonable individuals will come to accept the virtues upon reflection. As Audard (2007, p. 9) explains "principles of justice are not imposed upon citizens and derived from a superior authority, but are shown to be the result of their generalized agreement as free and equal persons willing to cooperate on a fair basis".

The idea that virtues might provide a way forward for citizens of a liberal democracy is touched upon in Chapter 1 when it is suggested that Aristotelian virtues might be seen to represent qualities that are fundamental for a moral life regardless of an individual's culture (Carr, 1993, p. 206). At this point, a distinction between 'virtues' and 'values' is useful. Haydon (2006) provides help on this matter. Firstly, he explains that not all values are considered moral. For example, he states "perhaps balance, diversity and beauty – would not naturally occur on many people's list of moral values" (p. 36). Virtues, on the other hand, are characterized as moral qualities. Secondly, Haydon (2006) asserts that:

> Our values, including moral values, do not have to be expressed by speaking about virtues. We may, for instance, say that honesty is a virtue, but we can also speak about what

> people should do (such as 'tell the truth') or should not do ('don't tell lies') (p. 37).

From Haydon's distinction one can consider virtues to be the qualities which underpin the values belonging to an individual, family, group or society. It might be argued, as it is understood Rawls (2005) does, that all values can be traced back to the virtue/s at their core. Hence, although individuals' values might differ it is hoped that consensus can be found in the virtues that underpin their values.

In examining Rawls (2005) theory one notices a consistent reference to 'reasonableness', in particular, with regards to people and to doctrines. Rawls (2005) describes reasonableness as follows:

> Persons are reasonable in one basic aspect when, among equals say, they are ready to propose principles and standards as fair terms of cooperation and to abide by them willingly, given the assurance that others will likewise do so. Those norms they view as reasonable for everyone to accept and therefore are justifiable to them; and they are ready to discuss the fair terms that others propose. The reasonable is an element of the idea of society as a system of fair cooperation and that its fair terms be reasonable for all to accept is part of its idea of reciprocity (p. 50).

It is inferred that reasonable people do not accept principles that only benefit themselves or only support their own values, and they would not expect others

to do so either. Through his definition of reasonableness, Rawls (*ibid*.) implies that reasonable people are concerned about the fair treatment of others. It is worth remembering the principles of Kant's doctrine, as outlined in Chapter 1. The most applicable principles being that "I should never act in such a way that I could not will that my maxim should be a universal law" (Kant, 1976, p.63) and "act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only" (Kant, 1976, p. 87). It would appear that Rawls draws upon the doctrines of both Kant and Aristotle to support his theory of overlapping consensus.

Carey (in Cairns et al, 2000) and Singh (1995) imply that it should be possible to determine values that all individuals see as desirable and necessary, and neither writer sees differing cultures as a barrier. Singh (1995, p. 13) points out that people are primarily members of the human race before they are members of society, members of their culture or members of institutions. Whilst, Carey (in Cairns et al, 2000, p. 18) claims that "the vast majority of people, even if they articulate the cultural assumption that morality is purely a private affair, actually have strong beliefs about some things that are absolutely good and others that are absolutely evil". If one accepts Singh's assertion (ibid.) that people are humans before anything else, then it is possible to imagine that there will be some agreement on the qualities that most individuals believe to be 'absolutely good' or 'absolutely evil'.

However, Carr (1991) acknowledges that values can and will be expressed in different ways. Carr (2003, p. 71) asserts that "it is for many if not most practical

purposes simply false to suppose that there is moral consensus in *any* society". This means that although everyone might come to accept the importance of being tolerant, it cannot be assumed or expected that everyone will demonstrate tolerance in the same ways. Winch (in Carr, 2005, p. 65) proposes that for consensus to be useful and accepted as a means of attending to society's values individuals must be offered some degree of autonomy in implementing values. He offers the following practical example:

> …a society would probably wish to promote the value of mutual cooperation and would thus educate future citizens to become socially useful and productive member of their communities. But there are many different ways of doing this: through paid employment, through voluntary work, through the pursuit of domestic life and so on… (p. 68).

Halliday (1999, p. 46) contends that individuals might renege on their initial agreement of "general values" when they come to realize that "those values contradict their own deeply held personal and particular beliefs". This implies that individuals can agree on the importance of certain values when the values are isolated from particular moral situations or dilemmas that they might be applied to. It is only when individuals are forced to respond to moral situations that they might find they are unable to uphold the agreed values, possibly due to a conflict with their personal, familial, cultural, religious, or other values. It seems that, as Carr (2003, p. 71) implies, a moral consensus reached by and for society might be more idealistic than practical. It can be concluded that, while Rawls' theory of 'overlapping consensus' helps society to determine

fundamental values or qualities that its citizens can agree upon as necessary and desirable, it doesn't fully provide a means for society of practically pursuing the 'common good'.

Halliday (1999) proposes a reinterpretation of Rawls' theory of 'overlapping consensus'. In his reinterpretation, Halliday (1999, p. 49) suggests that a "more localized and transitory" type of overlapping consensus, which "consists not so much in doctrines as on beliefs about what ought to be done in particular circumstances" would be useful. To explain further:

> The picture that is suggested here is a series of localized transitory agreements sharing no one thing in common but a series of family resemblances between different agreements made by neighbours and groups of neighbours in contingent association with one another. Such resemblances overlap one another. Let us complicate the picture still further by imagining that no one is a member of just one group but that everyone is a member of a number of groups. On such a picture, conflicts between groups and individuals are accepted as a normal part of ordinary life. In most cases it is neither useful nor possible to appeal explicitly to what might have been learnt as common ground between all members of society because there is no such common ground, merely shifting sands of agreements to which appeal can be made on a transitory basis (p. 49).

This reinterpretation means that rather than society trying to settle disagreements of a vast nature, groups attempt to settle the disagreements that

directly affect them and that require practical solutions. For example, the members of a school community form one group. Since, as Halliday explains, people are members of numerous groups a network of groups is formed that ultimately represents society. It can be imagined that in settling disagreements each group continuously works towards a conception of the common good, which in turn secures society's commitment to pursue the common good. It could be argued that Halliday's proposals support the theory of 'conscious social reproduction' as put forward by Gutmann (1993), since citizens participate in constructing a conception of the common good that is meaningful to them and the conception remains flexible in order to adapt to changing situations. In essence, a conception of the common good is never reached but always strived for.

Halliday (1999, p. 50) points out that "certainly there are occasions when people need to talk about their deepest moral disagreements or about injustices that are strongly felt". Hence, as with conflicts that might exist between home and school, there will be times when particular disagreements cannot simply be put to one side in order to secure a way forward for everyone involved. Nevertheless, it is Halliday's suggestion (*ibid*) that for the most part people will be able to establish common ground or "touchstones" when it comes to settling each disagreement. It might be argued that the common ground or 'touchstones' that Halliday refers to can be derived from and can define what has already been referred to in this chapter as a type of 'common culture'.

Concluding Remarks

Halliday's reinterpretation of Rawls' theory of 'overlapping consensus' provides a practical means for society to attend to diversity of values and the common good. The reinterpretation also provides a helpful way of understanding how schools might tackle the 'liberal democratic problem' by engaging in discussion about disagreements and attempting to establish common ground within their community on each occasion that it is necessary to do so. Since schools have a more limited influence over children's values in comparison with the influence of the values communicated at home it would seem that the need to establish common ground is essential, especially if moral education is to proceed in a meaningful way. One way that schools might begin to establish common ground is by exploring smaller moral issues that are meaningful and important to those involved. A possible source for these moral issues is the medium of films, stories and TV. There are many examples of TV programmes that enrapture large audience and attract much public discussion of the issues portrayed. TV programmes such as ITV's '*X Factor*' and BBC's '*Strictly Come Dancing*' have evoked particular debate in recent times, which at each turn has been closely documented and one might argue intensified by the media (for examples see Woods, 2009; Warren, 2009; Kirby, 2009).

In trying to fathom the appeal of British TV programmes, such as the ones mentioned, Mattessi (2009) strengthens the case that TV creates a common ground and provides stimulus for moral debate:

> But, perhaps above all, family television is about "journeys" about the odysseys that contestants undergo on their way to the shimmering spectaculars that are the Strictly, X Factor and Got Talent finals. And many a battling improver or unlikely hero has ridden a wave of misty-eyed public support for their "journey" right past the early fancies and all the way to the final. Witness SuBo.
>
> These journeys are important because they give the audience stories. A contestant who does everything perfectly right from the start is boring but a contestant who battles ... that's someone you can get behind. That's the fodder for water-cooler conversations in the office, for arguments in school grounds, for angry opinions at the dinner table. And that, if you'll excuse a bit of floweriness, is the stuff that brings people together. I know these glorified talent quests seem like superficial trivialities and maybe they are. But they are telling stories that resonate with audiences of enormous size and breadth and they are doing it in a way that is utterly out of the grasp of any other type of media. It may sound trite but shows like MasterChef, Strictly and Britain's Got Talent are doing what telly does better than anything ever invented: they are bringing people together (p. 7).

Mattessi (ibid.) implies that it is because TV programmes encourage debate and provide a forum for agreeing and disagreeing that they are appealing. This thesis argues that it is exactly this type of interaction that is necessary for individuals to begin to tackle moral issues together. Halliday (ibid, p. 51) asserts

that "the more that people have genuine opportunities to understand and solve differences with strangers, the more social and political capital is accumulated within a community". To relate this to the proposed use of stories, TV and films, it is suggested that in battling out the moral issues presented in the stories, TV programmes and films that individuals are interested in and care about a series of "family resemblances" (p. 49) can be created. It is surmised that in recognizing these 'family resemblances' schools and their communities can begin to develop a notion of what, in terms of morality, is desirable and acceptable for them. It might be argued that these notions form a type of capital within school communities, which schools can draw upon in some, although not all, moral situations. If agreements are to be regarded as "transitory", as Halliday (1999, p. 49) suggests, then it can be imagined that a school community might add to or detract from this capital upon each new moral deliberation. As well as dealing with issues of a smaller (yet still significant) nature, it is suggested that by developing ways to tackle and resolve issues on a common ground provided by stories, TV programmes and films, school communities can ultimately begin to address some of the bigger issues concerned with society and common humanity. For example, Stanley (2004, p. 33) exemplifies how a short extract from an episode of the popular television programme '*The Simpsons'* can evoke deliberation of bigger moral issues such as, fairness, equality, justice and reverence. It is argued that, through their deliberations, it is crucial that school communities attempt to address the bigger issues in order that they serve humanity, as desired by Mill (Rader, 2001), and not just aim to do what is best for themselves. The use of stories, TV and films as an approach

to moral education and as one possible means for schools to tackle the liberal democratic problem is further explored and developed in Chapter 5.

For now, it is clear that for this approach to work citizens must be committed to participate in establishing common ground and working together to sort out disagreements. It also follows that citizens must be adequately equipped to engage in such activity. Halliday (1999) implies that there is a need for citizens to value and develop qualities such as patience, open-mindedness and tolerance for them to reach agreements on matters that affect them and others around them. The aim is to encourage people so that they "are inclined to listen to the views of those with whom they disagree, to tolerate those views and sometimes to accept them even though they conflict with self interest" (p. 51).

Gutmann (1993, p. 8) confirms that education should prepare citizens for collectively reproducing the 'common good' and in doing so "must cultivate both moral character (the virtues of veracity, nonviolence, tolerance, etc.) and the capacity for moral reasoning (logic, critical understanding, etc.) in future citizens". Smith et al (2003, p. 243) explain that "moral reasoning refers to how we reason, or judge, whether an action is right or wrong: it is different from moral behaviour". It is worth remembering *phronesis* or 'practical wisdom', which Aristotle believed to be a type of reasoning or judgement that an individual required to be able to put his/her moral character into action. Like Aristotle, Gutmann asserts that *both* an understanding of and commitment to virtues, and an ability to reason morally are required by individuals. Neither one alone will do. Arguably, it is not only important to be able to reason with

one self. Halliday (1999, p. 45) highlights the importance of "public reasoning". This implies that citizens must learn to reason with one another also. It is proposed that exploring the moral issues in stories, TV programmes and films offers school communities a forum for public reasoning.

A philosopher who emphasizes the importance of moral reasoning and who highlights the social nature of its development is Lawrence Kohlberg. Through his combination of psychology and philosophy (Porter, 1972), Kohlberg hypothesizes that an individual's moral reasoning develops in stages. Crain (2004, p. 159) explains that Kohlberg's moral stage theory progresses from the early stages where "doing the right thing is obeying authority and avoiding punishment" to the later stages where "people are… more concerned with the principles and values that make for a good society". According to Kohlberg's moral stage theory, individuals progress from a concern, predominantly, for themselves to a stage where they base their moral judgements on a concern for the good of society. Blatt and Kohlberg (1975) found that children could advance through the stages, and hence develop their moral reasoning skills, by engaging in moral discussion. This finding adds strength to the argument that individuals develop morally through social interaction. Kohlberg's moral stage theory is revisited later in this thesis.

It can be suggested that moral reasoning equips citizens to make moral decisions and moral judgements on a case by case, or situation by situation, basis. This might allows the concept of the 'common good' to remain flexible and changeable, just as our society and the moral situations that citizens

encounter continue to change. For example, advances in medical science mean that people must now consider moral issues and dilemmas that have never before needed to be thought of. As indicated in Chapter 1, moral reasoning might be considered an essential skill for citizens of a liberal democratic society. This being so, education should adequately equip pupils and assists them in their development of moral reasoning. This might include providing opportunities for pupils to engage in moral discussions, particularly of the kind that pupils can relate to. Otherwise it is likely that pupils will be able to reach conclusions or consensus in a general way that does not truly encourage them to reflect on how moral situations might affect them or how they might put their values into practice. In Chapter 4, an analysis of policy documents considers whether Scottish primary education currently provides a place for moral discussions and whether it adequately allows for and/or encourages the exploration of values and the development of moral reasoning skills.

## Chapter Three – A Review of Research on Teachers' Perceptions of Moral Education

This chapter reviews a range of available research based on teachers' perceptions of moral education. The chapter determines how supported teachers generally feel as moral educators and how able they feel to fulfil their role.

The following review of research confirms that empirical work into moral education in primary schools is not widespread. Hansen (2001) states:

> …in comparison with research on such issues as effective instructional methods and the teaching of specific subjects, school- and classroom-based inquiry into the moral aspects of teaching has just begun (p. 826 – 827).

One can only speculate about the reasons for the lack of research in this area. Perhaps, the ambiguous nature of moral education makes data collection more problematic. Tom (1984, p. 93) suggests that this might be the case when he states "factors that have inhibited our awareness of the moral dimension include… our historical propensity to study curriculum and teaching in a 'scientific' or value-neutral way". Halliday (2002) confirms that research into values is fraught with difficulties. He argues that this type of research is open to misrepresentation since it is difficult for researchers and their subjects to accurately understand what values mean to one another. Another explanation might be that some researchers are put off by the contention surrounding

exactly who is responsible for moral education, e.g., the school, the state, the church or the family. Or maybe there has simply been a lack of interest in the area.

Some studies into teachers' perceptions of moral education and their role as moral educators are available. Despite this, Sanger (2001, p. 683) claims that "researchers still know little about how teachers view morality or themselves as moral agents, let alone the extent to which these views are linked to their teaching practice". The next section outlines a selection of studies and draws tentative conclusions. It is apparent from the review that little research of this type has been conducted within the Scottish education system.

## Teachers' Role as Moral Educators

### *Teachers as moral role models*

The research reviewed suggests that teachers generally accept that they have responsibilities as moral educators. The majority of teachers involved in the research projects view themselves as role models, with some teachers extending this role into their personal lives. The studies extend to teachers in different countries, who teach at different stages and who have different levels of teaching experience. Teachers' perceptions of themselves as moral role models do not appear to be hindered by these variables.

Several studies highlight teachers' awareness of their responsibilities as moral educators and as moral role models. A survey conducted by Beddoe (1981) with

primary and secondary teachers in Trinidad and Tobago indicates that teachers see themselves as having an important role to play in the moral education of pupils. The survey shows willingness on the teachers' part to accept this responsibility. Out of the 310 participants in the study, 82% indicated that moral education should be the responsibility of all teachers (p. 98). A similar percentage of respondents expressed that moral education should be the combined responsibility of "home", "church" and "teachers" (p. 98) indicating that the majority of teachers were quite sure that the responsibility should not be theirs alone. A criticism of Beddoe's research might be that it represents the (perhaps more hopeful) views of less experienced teachers still in training. However, similar findings by Joseph and Efron (1993) would seem to invalidate this criticism.

Using a combination of questionnaires and interviews, Joseph and Efron's study (1993) surveyed 180 teachers representing "various age groups, years of teaching and types of schools and communities … in a mid-west metropolitan area of the United States" (p. 203 - 204). According to Joseph and Efron (1993), these variables did not create significant differences within the findings. The study indicates that the majority of teachers felt that they were responsible in their professional, and to a lesser extent in their personal lives, for acting as role models to their pupils. Joseph and Efron (1993) report that "nearly all teachers surveyed" indicated that they wanted to impact on their pupils' morality and the type of people that they would become. This finding suggests that the majority of teachers view their responsibility as moral role models as a desirable duty and a purpose of the job, not merely as something forced upon them. This

might indicate that teaching as a profession attracts a certain type of moral person. Carr (2006) describes a traditional view of the role of the teacher as "The Cultural Custodian":

> …the teacher is a cultural or moral missionary whose task it is to uphold and exemplify certain objectively grounded virtues and values. On this view, good teachers need to be certain (moral) kinds of persons, personal moral failings are just as if not more serious than failures of technique or skill, and teachers are in business to uphold a particular way of life in much the same way as *religious ministers* or *priests* (p. 226).

Chapter 4 offers an explanation for this traditional view of the teacher when it determines that education, schooling and hence teaching began (certainly in Scotland) with an aim to moralise society. The traditional view of the teacher suggests that individuals must generally require a strong sense of moral purpose to be attracted to and best suited to the role of teacher. Through the philosophical approaches that it outlines, Chapter 1 introduces the idea that some individuals might be more suited to the moral role of the teacher.

While it is argued that teachers in different contexts might accept (and even embrace the idea) that they have moral responsibilities and a moral role, Higgins' (1995) research suggests that teachers can perceive and adopt their moral role in different ways. A comparative study of American and Russian teachers conducted by Higgins (1995) showed that teachers from both countries perceived themselves as moral role models for their pupils. However, the

research indicated that the level of expectation that teachers placed upon themselves as moral role models differed in each country. While, the American teachers accepted that it was ok to make mistakes in the eyes of their pupils, the Russian teachers felt that to do so would be detrimental to their status as moral role. This probably explains why the Russian teachers in the study "held themselves to perfectionist standards" (p. 151). It could be proposed that differences in the way that a teacher's responsibilities as moral role model are perceived might present difficulties for teachers and for school communities. For example, a lack of consistency in the moral behaviours that are encouraged by teachers could send confusing messages to pupils, parents and the school staff.

A study conducted by Carr and Landon (1998) indicates that values can be a particular source of confusion in schools. Their findings showed that teachers in Scottish secondary schools were less sure of what was expected of them in terms of values education and in their approach to other moral issues in schools that adopted a more liberal approach. This finding realises the liberal democratic problem faced by schools, as Chapter 2 discusses. Like Higgins (1995), Carr and Landon (1998) found that the teachers in their study generally agreed that moral education should be the responsibility of all teachers but that there were "doubts about whether there exists much popular agreement on what this means" (p. 171). The next section explores the problem of teacher uncertainty and the impact that this can have.

*Values is an area of concern for teachers*

The review of research reveals that the area of values is a concern for teachers. Some teachers are uncertain about whether they should impart their personal values. In some cases, teachers want to share their values with their pupils but refrain from doing so out of fear of conflict with parents, other teachers and senior management. The study conducted by Joseph and Efron (1993) particularly highlights the uncertainty and difficulties that teachers can experience with regards to communicating values.

Joseph and Efron's study (1993) used questionnaires with 180 teachers to determine their "value compatibility with people in their schools and communities and their perception of freedom to express values and beliefs" (p. 201).

The main findings of the questionnaire revealed that (p. 205 – 206):

- Some of the teachers were unsure of their "personal value systems" and "nearly one half of the respondents" claimed that their personal values were still developing.
- "slightly more than one half of the respondents affirm value compatibility with community members and slightly less than one half of this population believe that they have similar values to their students or parents of students"

- Many of the teachers felt that they were "free to express their values in the classroom, with administrators, parents and community members"

These findings do not necessarily imply that the area of values is problematic for teachers. However, the second part of Joseph and Efron's study highlights a divergence between the teachers' views and their actions, indicating that problems exist.

For the second part of their research, Joseph and Efron selected 26 teachers from the original study population to participate in "structured interviews" (p. 206). Ten core questions were asked during each interview in order to encourage the teachers to recount their experiences of "moral conflict" and "moral issues" within their teaching (p. 206).

Whilst, the findings from the questionnaires showed that many teachers felt that they could share their values with pupils and parents, during the interviews a number of teachers reported that they "avoid telling their personal values" (p. 212). Some teachers stated that if they chose to share a value, they made it "very clear" that the value was expressed merely as a "personal opinion" (*ibid*.). This suggests that the teachers were concerned that the sharing of their values might be looked upon unfavourably. Joseph and Efron (1993, p. 218) attribute this concern to "the vulnerability of teachers" and explain that within many of the interviews teachers expressed "apprehension about offending people or fear of doing what is forbidden". These findings highlight the impact of the distinction

between private and public morality and lead one to suggest that, at times, the role of a moral educator can be a daunting and uncertain one.

However, it seems unlikely that teachers can completely avoid sharing the values that they see as important since Joseph and Efron found that:

> …despite the fact that only a minority of interviewees initially assumed (in the questionnaires and their first responses during the interviews) they should directly teach values, every one, at some point in the interview, shared with the researcher at least one value that he or she believed should be taught (p. 213).

Chapter 2 suggests that the nature of moral values means that anyone with an interest in education is likely to possess strong feelings about the desirable qualities and values it should hope to engender in children. It seems only natural then that teachers will hold certain values to be important. Halstead (1999) argues that it is also likely that there will be times when teachers feel that they cannot reinforce the values that a child learns at home as they conflict with the values that school wishes to promote.

Joseph and Efron (1993) claim that their study emphasises the complicated role of teachers as moral educators. They conclude that “teachers sense an inchoate form of suppression that may very well restrict their full actualising of the moral roles and certainly creates confusion and discomfort” (p. 219). This conclusion reflects the difficulty that schools face in attempting to morally educate pupils. The impact of diverse values is also highlighted. It seems that for teachers to

fulfil their moral role, schools and their communities must find a way of resolving conflicts over values and moral matters.

*Values are interpreted and understood differently*

Just as it is suggested that teachers might perceive their moral roles differently, there is evidence to suggest that teachers might also interpret and understand values differently. A study conducted by Sanger (2001) reveals that while teachers expressed the importance of similar values, their interpretations of the values differed. This finding might again suggest that difficulties can occur for teachers when putting their moral role into practice.

Sanger's study (2001) aimed to "gain an understanding of how teachers view morality and their own moral agency" (p. 683). Like Joseph and Efron (1993), Sanger collected information using teacher interviews. Sanger aimed to record "the unstructured talk of teachers" (p. 685), whereas Joseph and Efron approached teacher interviews with a set of structured questions. Sanger's intention was that this would allow him to gain a truer insight into teachers' views about the moral dimensions of teaching in the form of "minimally researcher-constructed data" (*ibid*.). The teacher interviews were "open-ended, semi-structured conversations about themselves and their teaching" (p. 686). Each teacher then participated in a meeting at their own school, where a video recording was made of their teaching practice. The video recordings were used as a vehicle for discussing with teachers their "moral and intellectual goals" (p. 687) and how these related to their practice.

From the data collected, Sanger selected two teachers whom he assessed as being "very accomplished teachers and interesting and articulate people worth knowing better" (p. 686). The selection was also based on the teachers' "very different teaching styles" and the fact that they "were practising in very different contexts" (*ibid*.). Both teachers were experienced teachers who practiced at elementary level in the American education system (better known as primary level within the UK education system). The main difference in context that Sanger highlights is that one of the selected teachers taught within a school that adopted an "African-centred education" (p. 687). Sanger explains that within this school the notion of family was very important, and the members of the school community were viewed "as an extended family" (p. 693). Sanger engaged in further dialogue with each teacher, as part of what he calls "belief interviews" (p. 688).

A main finding of Sanger's research seems to be that teachers have "complex beliefs about morality" (p. 695) that impact upon their practice and "who they are as teachers" (p. 696). A finding which Sanger, himself, states "may not seem very significant" (p. 697). Perhaps a more interesting finding is that although the two selected teachers showed agreement on some of the values to be shared with pupils, e.g., respect, it was found that the values were "defined and applied somewhat differently" by both (p. 698). For example, the first teacher spoke of "mutual respect" (p. 690) with and between the students as important, whereas for the second teacher "respect for your elders" and community was what mattered (p. 692). This suggests that although a consensus of shared values might be possible, differing interpretations of values are inevitable.

Chapter 2 discusses the idea that individuals within society can interpret and practise the same values in different ways. The chapter also argues that individuals might go against agreed values when they realise that, in practice, "those values contradict their own deeply held personal and particular beliefs" (Halliday, 1999, p. 46). The same problem might occur for teachers if they are forced into identifying and are governed by a set of school values.

This finding has implications for teachers, schools and education systems that base their ethos and teaching of morality on a set of shared values. Veugelers and De Kat (2003, p. 76) highlight the Scottish education system as one in which "several central values are applied". Recently, a 'refreshed' set of national values upon which it is claimed Scottish society is based has been introduced by the new curriculum for nursery, primary and secondary school (Scottish Education Department Curriculum Review Group, 2004). Veugelers and Vedder (2003) state that "a moral agenda for teachers" (p. 379) is created with the introduction of a set of values. Chapter 2 suggests that rather than settling upon a list of shared values an alternative solution might be to attend to values on a situation by situation basis as and when required (Halliday, 1999, p. 49). It is proposed that, in this way, teachers might be presented with opportunities to explore a range of values and possible interpretations with each other, their pupils and members of the wider school community.

*Different expectations of how teachers are expected to deal with moral issues/values can be problematic*

The need for discussion of values and moral matters is further highlighted by research that suggests that differing expectations are held about how teachers should deal with moral situations. A large scale study conducted by Veugelers and De Kat (2003) suggests this to be the case.

Veugelers and De Kat (2003) issued questionnaires to students, parents and teachers in eight Dutch secondary schools. The questionnaires were used to ascertain each group's views on how teachers should respond to moral "critical situations" (p. 78). For the purpose of the study, "a distinction was made between two types of situations" (p. 79). The two types of situations included:

- Situations in which a value laden *incident* takes place. These incidents concern; nagging, joking about head scarves, displaying a racist poster, a swastika on the blackboard, swearing, making a fool of a fellow student, and making jokes about churchgoing;
- Situations in which *topics are being discussed* that have a clear moral aspect (p. 79).

It might be suggested that the first type of situation can be said to represent moral education through the hidden curriculum, whilst the second type of situation represents moral education through the formal or planned curriculum. Several of the studies reviewed highlight the importance of moral education as a

feature of both the formal and hidden curriculum (Beddoe, 1981; Joseph and Efron, 1993; Kutnick, 1988).

In Veugelers and De Kat's (2003) study the questionnaire detailed a variety of situations that a teacher might face. Students and parents were asked to "indicate how they feel a teacher should react" (p. 79) and teachers were asked to consider "how they would really act" in each situation (*ibid*.). For each situation, the respondents were provided with six possible actions to choose from. For the situations that involved value laden incidents the actions were:

- *ignore* the incident;
- *refer* the "problem;"
- *interfere* and indicate *that* this behaviour is unacceptable;
- *interfere* and indicate *why* this behaviour is unacceptable;
- *interfere* and start *a discussion with the students involved*;
- *interfere* and start *a discussion with the whole class*. (p. 79 - 80)

The six possible actions for the situations that involved "value laden topics" (p. 80) were:

- *do nothing,* students have a right to their own opinion, even if it is extreme;
- *transfer* the important values that are related to the situation;
- *explain* several views related to the situation;
- let the students give their *own unsubstantiated view;*
- *discuss* the values concerned in the class *without* the teacher clearly stating his own views;

- *discuss* the values concerned in the class *with* the teacher clearly stating his own views (*ibid*).

The two sets of actions are based on the "models of 'transfer of values' and 'value communication' and a combination of these" (p. 79). These models represent two different approaches to values education. Veugelers (2000, p. 37) explains that 'transfer of values' refers to "transfer by means of the curriculum and the moral climate in the school". This approach is advocated strongly through character education, which has become popular in the United States. Lickona (1996) explains that:

> Character education holds, as a starting philosophical principle, that there are widely shared, objectively important core ethical values—such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect for self and others—that form the basis of good character. A school committed to character education explicitly names and publicly stands for these values…. and enforces them by holding all school members accountable to standards of conduct consistent with the core values (p. 95).

On the contrary, 'value communication' is "the educational concept in the Kohlberg tradition" (Veugelers and De Kat, 2003, p. 76). According to Reimer (in Power, Higgins and Kolhberg, 1989, p. 15) it was Kohlberg's belief that "teachers have the responsibility to *teach* values, though they do not have the right to impose their own, or any set of values on their students". Through 'value communication' teachers teach *about* values, rather than teach *to* values. Chapter

2 argues that education should equip students with *both* an understanding of different values, and the ability to reason morally in order for them to make their own judgements about moral situations (Gutmann, 1993). Gutmann's theory reflects a 'value communication' approach to moral education. It is apparent that 'transfer of values' and 'value communication' offer very different approaches to moral education.

Veugelers and De Kat (2003, p. 78) report that "a total of 837 completed questionnaires were received: 571 student questionnaires, 180 parent questionnaires, and 86 teacher questionnaires". From the responses gathered, it was found that students generally thought that teachers should ignore value laden incidents. In contrast, parents preferred the teacher's use of "a discussion in class" (p. 86) and were keen for teachers to indicate to students why a behaviour was unacceptable. Teachers also showed a preference for indicating to students why their behaviour was unacceptable. Yet, it was found that teachers chose to hold a class discussion "less often" (p. 86). Veugelers and De Kat (2003) speculate that teachers chose this option less frequently because the teachers would have to take responsibility for carrying out the discussions themselves and because such discussions could be "rather time consuming" (p. 86). Veugelers and De Kat (2003, p. 87) went on to state that since teachers "refer to tight programs" they have little time to engage in value discussions with pupils. Time pressures might also explain why 'discussing the matter with the students involved' was also favoured less by teachers.

An observational study carried out in twelve Scottish primary classrooms found that "it was rare for the researchers to observe teachers engaged in pastoral activities and dealing with problems, usually of a social nature, which require to be investigated and resolved" (McPake et al, 1999, p. 40). The researchers speculated that the lack of this type of activity may have been because the teachers "perceived a risk that, as outsiders, we (the researchers) might not recognise the need for such interventions and judge the teacher to be wasting teaching time" (*ibid*.). It is suggested that teachers might also be concerned that members of the senior management team, their colleagues and pupils' parents will perceive the interventions as a waste of teaching time too.

Perhaps some teachers themselves see this type of activity as a waste of time and discount children's moral dilemmas/difficulties. Cassidy (2007) claims that for teachers to disregard children's moral dilemmas is to take the easy option. She argues that children should be granted status as moral beings:

> It suits adult sensibilities and power structures that children should not be acknowledged as having any kind of moral sense or perspective; however, this is not the case… For instance, they will choose with whom to be friends, they must decide what games to play or how they will interact with other individuals. In other words, they will often be offered choices and they must elect which to take, and bearing in mind that actions are invariably moral, they are making moral choices (p. 33).

Another reason that teachers might avoid moral discussions is that they do not feel able to effectively conduct them. Some studies show that teachers are not properly equipped or trained to carry out these types of moral discussion with their pupils (for examples see Cummings, et al, 2007; Chang, 1994; Carr and Landon, 1999). A particular concern for teachers might be that different moral issues can arise unexpectedly, allowing little time to consider how to respond. Chapter 1 proposes that pupils be given opportunities to explore a range of different moral situations, in order to consider how they might respond. By engaging in this type of activity it is hoped that pupils will be better prepared to act in moral situations and will not need to contemplate every possible response on each occasion (Johnson, 2007). In a similar way, if teachers are encouraged to examine and contemplate philosophical perspectives on moral education then they might also be better equipped to respond to moral situations as they arise. Research conducted by Tirri (1999) with Finnish secondary teachers shows that there is a need for teachers to be able to adapt the strategies that they use on a "case-specific" basis (p. 46).

In contrast to the findings of Veugelers and De Kat (2003) and McPake et al, (1999), a study carried out with 480 teachers in Israeli elementary schools shows that "a private talk or dialogue" was selected as the most popular strategy for dealing with 'socio-moral' dilemmas (Maslovaty, 2000, p. 434). Only 4.4% of teachers claimed that they would choose to ignore a 'socio-moral' dilemma (p. 436). Maslovaty suggests that teachers chose to talk through dilemmas with their students most often because they felt that they had a responsibility to do so (p. 437). Maslovaty also affirms that teachers were more likely to make use of

this strategy when it was advocated by the school district and when "the teacher receives support from leadership and colleagues" (p. 441). This finding suggests that in dealing with moral situations teachers will be more likely to adopt a strategy that they know will be best supported by others within the school and/or by a higher authority. The next section of this chapter discusses the need for teachers as moral educators to be supported at a higher level.

To return to the value laden discussions in Veugelers and De Kat's study, it was found that students mostly felt that teachers should 'do nothing' or that they "should go no further than an explanation of the various views that could be taken" (p. 86 – 87). This suggests that students felt that they should be free to develop their own values and that they valued teachers' *knowledge* of differing viewpoints more than their *opinions*. Parents were mainly keen that teachers should be involved in the discussions. However, parent responses showed that they were "divided with regard to the teacher giving his own opinion" (p. 87). From the teachers' perspective, 57% indicated that they would give their own views during discussions. This finding implies that the teachers in Veugelers and De Kat's study were less worried about sharing their personal views than those involved in the study by Joseph and Efron (1993). Differences in geographical location, the level of support offered to teachers or the time that has elapsed between the studies might explain the discrepancy, however, further investigation is required to confirm.

Veugelers and De Kat (2003, p. 80) conclude that the students, parents and teachers in their study regarded "*value communication* as the most important

educational method of moral education". Parents and teachers also viewed the "transfer of values" as "fairly important" (*ibid*.). However, Veuglers and De Kat (2003, p. 88) confirm that the parents were only happy for teachers to transfer their own values because it was the parents' "hope that the teachers embrace the same values as they themselves have". The impact of differences between moral education in the home and in school is reflected in this condition. This type of condition might leave teachers feeling uncertain about sharing their personal values, since it is unlikely that there will always be a match between the parents' values and the teacher's values. The need for willingness on both parts to discuss values and to find a way of dealing with value conflicts is highlighted.

*Need for emphasis at a higher level*

Maslovaty's findings (2000) suggest that for teachers to feel confident in their approach to dealing with moral situations clear guidance from a higher authority is required. Likewise, the responses to Beddoe's survey (1981) show that teachers "felt a great need" (p. 101) to be supported in their teaching of moral education. The study found that there was a sense that a higher power, perhaps the government, was needed to give impetus to a programme of moral education within schools. This is evident from the two selected teacher comments shown below:

> I believe that moral education should have started in our school system a long time ago.

I think they have waited too long and I hope that a plan of action is immediate (p. 102).

Afifi (1997) discovered that Egyptian teachers held a similar attitude towards the need for a higher power with regards to the moral aspect of education. From the questionnaire responses of 600 Egyptian teachers, Afifi concluded that it was the general feeling of the teachers that "neither the educational authorities nor the schools are sufficiently committed to the moral mission of the school" (p. iv).

In relation to Scottish primary education, guidance on the teaching of moral education has previously been provided through the 5 – 14 National Guidelines (SOED, 1992). Whilst, more recently the aims of moral education have been reiterated in the new '*Curriculum for Excellence*' (CfE) produced by the Scottish Government. An analysis of the new curricular documents and other policy documents relating to moral education within Scottish primary education is given in Chapter 4. The chapter finds and questions an apparent lack of guidance offered to Scottish teachers on their role as moral educators. As with the Egyptian teachers in Afifi's study (1997), it is speculated that Scottish teachers might feel that more support is required from those in higher authority. There is scope for further research to determine Scottish teachers' perceptions of moral education and their role as moral educators.

Gillies (in Bryce and Humes, 2008) describes the impact that different political policies and initiatives have had on education agendas in Scotland. He implies that education agendas become more or less of a priority depending on how

much emphasis the government places upon them. Chapter 1 suggests that an over-emphasis on effectiveness can affect the manner in which moral education is taught, as it can become more about *appearing* moral rather than actually *being* moral (Pring, 2001). Halstead (in Carr, 2005) concurs with Pring (2001) that an emphasis on effectiveness and performance can be detrimental to the teaching of moral education:

> It is a clash between those who want the curriculum to reflect economic relevance and the needs of industry and those who want it to promote personal autonomy and the pursuit of truth, between those who think that the performance of a school can be best judged by quantifiable outputs and recorded in league tables and those who would judge a school in terms of the critical understanding, imaginative insight and human relationships it generates. This clash generates very real tensions for teachers who may feel that the interests of the school and the interests of the child are no longer in harmony and they are trapped between the market values which schools are being forced to adopt and the values which they as educators wish to pass on to their pupils (p. 119 – 120).

If governments choose to emphasise effectiveness and productivity over the development of pupils' morality, as according to Haydon (2006) so often is the case, then there is little doubt that teachers too will be forced to prioritise in a similar way. It is suggested that there is a need for governments to 'upgrade' the status of moral education, in order to re-emphasise its importance and to

support teachers in fulfilling their moral role. Pring (2001) implies that the status of moral education might be 'upgraded' by governments by ensuring that it does not become detached from the means of education, i.e., by ensuring that it is considered in everything that education does and is encouraged to do. Chapter 4 examines what emphasis is, and has previously been, placed on moral education in the Scottish education system.

## Concluding Remarks

The research reviewed clearly shows that, while most teachers feel a strong sense of obligation as moral role models, there are many challenges that can make their role difficult to fulfil. One suggested reason that teachers might struggle with their moral role is a lack of philosophical understanding of moral education and the issues surrounding it. As in Chapter 1, it is suggested that teacher education should provide opportunities for teachers to study various philosophical perspectives on moral education, in order for them to develop a philosophical basis for their teaching of moral education and to be able to respond to moral situations with more confidence. Campbell (1997) states:

> To understand the moral and ethical complexities of the value dimensions of teaching, student teachers should address and explore significant educational issues and experiences… from an enlightened grounding in philosophical principles, theoretical positions and conceptual frames comprising the foundations of educational thought (p. 257).

Several of the studies show that it is important for teachers to be able to deal with moral issues across the curriculum and as they arise unexpectedly in the day-to-day life of the classroom and school. The idea that teachers might choose to respond to moral issues by engaging in discussion with pupils (Veugelers and De Kat, 2003; Maslovaty, 2000) implies that teachers must be equipped with moral reasoning skills. This review suggests that teachers might not always be equipped with the necessary skills to engage in such discussions; hence this too should become a priority for teacher training.

Chapter 2 explains that the nature of values in a liberal democracy means that value conflicts between home and school can be expected. However, it is not always clear when these conflicts will arise, as with the moral issues that arise unexpectedly within a school day. If teachers are to attempt to settle disagreements on a situation by situation basis then they will have to be open to and prepared for a variety of possibilities. The proposed use of stories, TV programmes and films as a vehicle for moral education makes it likely that teachers will need to deal with impromptu moral discussions based on moral issues that pupils have recently been exposed to. For example, an informal conversation about what a particular character did in the previous night's episode of *Coronation Street* could become a class-wide moral debate or discussion. One speculates that many teachers will feel uneasy about this type of unstructured activity. Beyer (1997) confirms:

> …to entertain moral issues and engage in moral reasoning is to engage in more open-ended forms of inquiry that some may perceive as too undirected or ungoverned, or simply too removed

> from the facts that ought to guide the curriculum (p. 247, see also Beyer, 2006).

This review highlights that teachers need to feel supported in their role as moral educators. For teachers to feel comfortable to deal with value conflict situations and the moral discussions that arise in unstructured ways and to feel that this type of activity is valued, they should be supported at policy level and by those with direct authority over them, e.g. a school's management team and the local authority.

Finally, Chapter 1 concludes that teaching is best conceived primarily as a moral endeavour. This chapter confirms that the aims of moral education should not be separated from the aims and means of education itself (Pring, 2001). Hence, it can be concluded that the moral role of the teacher should be encouraged in everything that he/she does, and in turn emphasised to pupils in what they do also. Halliday (1999) proposes:

> If it is accepted that there are a multitude of practices into which students can be inducted and that through such induction, students learn to distinguish between internal and external goods in the way that MacIntyre (1981: 188) describes, then a practical induction is necessarily a moral education. This argument provides grounds for a curriculum, designed to encourage citizenship, to be concerned minimally with engaging all students in sufficient depth in at least one practice so that they come to distinguish those values that are intrinsic to the successful development of the

> practice from those that arise instrumentally out of the practice. (p. 53).

One example might be that teachers emphasise and nurture values such as perseverance, consideration and care in their teaching of writing by consistently encouraging pupils to take time to carefully plan and complete their writing and to go back to correct any errors or make improvements. Writing, of course, is not the only practice through which values can be explored and nurtured. It is suggested that teachers should be granted the time and opportunity to explore values with pupils in all areas of the curriculum. Again, education policy should reflect these aims and support teachers in their moral endeavours, in order for teachers to feel that their endeavours are worthwhile and valued. Chapter 4 now considers how well Scottish educational policy supports teachers in their moral role.

## Chapter Four - Scottish Educational Policy: Moral Education

The chapter locates moral education within Scottish primary education. The chapter begins by briefly tracing the historical roots of the coupling of religious and moral education in Scottish primary education. It is shown that from the beginning a primary function of education in Scotland was to moralise society.
An outline and analysis of key policy documents is given to build an account of the role of moral education in Scottish primary education until now. The policy analysis shows how moral education has changed over time from being considered a feature of all education and a part of the fabric of school life to mainly being emphasized as a formal area of the curriculum. From analysis of more recent policy documents, it is argued that there is scope for moral education to be explored through a variety of curricular areas rather than predominantly through religious education or as a discrete curricular area. Finally, the chapter evaluates whether current policy documents provide enough guidance and support for Scottish primary teachers in their role as moral educators.

### The link with religious education

It is evident that from the outset of formal education in Scotland, education and religion (more precisely Christianity) were closely linked. It can be argued that the purposes of this connection were twofold; the first being to educate Scotland's citizens in the ways of Christianity, and the second to more generally moralise society. This section provides evidence to support this argument.

Much can be learned of the connection between education and religion in Scotland from the work of Robert Anderson. He associates the link between education and Christianity with the Scottish Reformers, who he claims had "a clear vision of the role of education in creating a godly society" (Anderson in Bryce and Humes, 2008, p. 205). Conroy (2001, p. 545) confirms an earlier link when he states that prior to the Reformation "Catholic burgh schools represented the backbone of Scottish education". Nevertheless, Conroy (*ibid*.) concurs that the Scottish Reformers had the strongest influence on Scottish education. He states that "it would be hard to overestimate the importance of the Reformation on Scottish education *per se* or indeed the importance attached to education by the Reformers" (p. 545).

Anderson (1995, p. 3) further highlights the influence of the Reformers' vision when he explains that an act passed by the Scottish Parliament in 1696 led to education being viewed as "an instrument of religious authority", through which the church could pursue their quest "to impose conformity and root out dissent". In practical terms this began with the placement of "a public school in every parish" (Anderson, 1985, p. 83), within which "children were expected to learn the church's Shorter Catechism by heart, as well as to master the reading of the Bible" (Anderson, 1995, p. 5). The method of memorization highlights that a primary aim of education was for pupils to conform. In doing so the pupils were provided with a rigid moral code to abide by.

The parishes were not only responsible for accommodating the schools. They also took an active role in their day to day running. Anderson (1995, p. 3)

explains that the church ensured that even the poorest children could attend by paying their school fees, even although attendance at school, at that time, was not compulsory. Furthermore, the parish ministers took responsibility for the "daily supervision" of the school, whilst "the presbytery, the ecclesiastical authority at the level above parishes, was responsible for inspecting schools and testing the qualifications and orthodoxy of teachers" (Anderson, 1995, p.4). The fact that the teachers were governed by the Christian church makes it likely that the 'orthodoxy of teachers' refers to their allegiance to the teachings and values of the Christian church. Anderson (1995) suggests that this would not have been a problem for many teachers since according to him:

> …some (teachers) had already qualified in divinity but failed to find a parish, while others saw teaching as a temporary phase while they continued to study for the ministry (p.6).

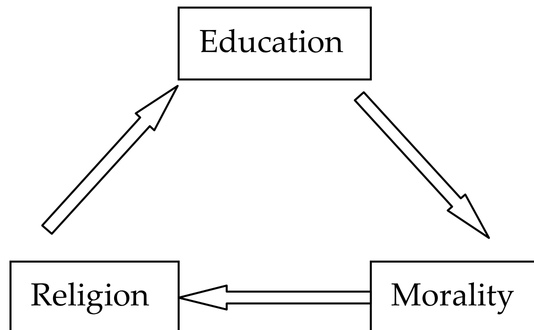
It can be surmised that all of these measures were put in place to guarantee that the teachings and values of the church would be transmitted to, and presumably adopted by, the pupils.

## Origins of Formal Provision

Evidence above suggests that religion, morality and education were inextricably linked from the beginning of formal education in Scotland. However, somewhere along the way the link between the three has become less secure.

This can be demonstrated in the following ways:

*The beginning of formal education in Scotland*




*At this time, education, religion and morality were intertwined with the purpose of each being to inform the other.*

*It can be suggested that this model still holds for denominational schools in Scotland today.*

*More recent times in Scottish Education*

*The introduction of non-denominational schools in Scotland has led to a change in the way that these areas are linked. The model above argues that religion and morality continue to share a bond through curricular links, while morality and education share a bond through the ethos and 'hidden' curriculum.*

Undoubtedly, this change can be attributed to the Education (Scotland) Act 1872, which saw the beginning of a state controlled education system, as described by Anderson (in Bryce and Humes, 2008):

> It (the 1872 Act) created a 'state' system by giving control of most schools to an elected school board in each burgh and parish, and persuaded the Presbyterian churches to hand over their schools to the boards (p.208).

It can be suggested that at this time the teaching of religion became more subject based and less a function of education in general. Anderson (*ibid*.) explains that the 1872 Act led to a broadening of the curriculum, which soon included "subjects like history, geography, elementary science, physical training, and some semi-vocational elements: woodwork for boys, cookery and 'domestic economy' for girls" (p. 210). This curriculum is a far cry from the curriculum as described by Anderson, which included mastery of the Bible, and again shows the move away from religion as a function of education. One speculates that the move away from religion would have shifted many schools' focus in the ways that they sought to teach and encourage morality. The following section outlines and analyses some of the key policy documents that have influenced the ways that moral education has been taught in Scotland until now.

Moral education in recent times

In 1950 the Scottish Education Department (SED) produced '*The Primary School in Scotland: A Memorandum on the Curriculum*'. Within this publication, which aimed to outline curriculum matters and address issues of a whole school nature, a chapter is devoted to 'Education in Character and Conduct' (Chapter 25, p. 96 - 100). The chapter outlines recommended aims and methods for the moral education of children. SED (1950) begin by identifying that the responsibility for a child's moral education "lies partly with the school, but principally with his parents, who may or may not bring him within the range of religious influence" (p. 96). They go on to assert that "not a few parents are neglectful of the moral training of their children" (*ibid*.) and that, as a

consequence, schools are expected to accept full responsibility for the moral education of some pupils. It is made clear that schools should only be expected to do so much in this respect:

> …the school can and does do much to shape the character and conduct of pupils; the need and the task are the greater when parents and guardians neglect their responsibility. But it must be fully recognized that the opportunities of the school are severely limited: the pupil is in school less than thirty hours a week; for the rest of the week he is subject to influences over which the school has no control (p. 96).

The opening of this chapter suggests that, at that time, there was some contention between school and home over how much responsibility each group *should* have for morally educating children. The matter of how much influence each group *could* have over a child also seems to have been an issue. Chapter 2 suggests that the same tensions between schools and parents exist today. A quick search of UK newspapers confirms that tensions surrounding the responsibilities of schools and parents are a modern problem. One example is the increased focus on the teaching of manners in school, which according to some Scottish newspapers has become necessary due to a lack of teaching in the home. An article in '*The Scotsman'* claims:

> Scottish parents of primary school children are now deemed so ineffective at teaching their offspring basic social skills that a scheme called "Nurture Class" has begun in Glasgow. The

> project, which was first piloted five years ago, was devised to teach children how to sit at a table, use cutlery, say "please" and "thank you" and relate to others in a non-confrontational way (Glover, 2005, p. 26).

While the '*Daily Mail*' reports:

> MANY Scots parents fail to pass on basic good manners to their children, leaving schools to cope with unruly, ignorant pupils, it was claimed yesterday.
>
> Teaching unions said their members often have to provide coaching in such simple social skills as using cutlery or holding a conversation with others (Levy, 2008, p. 8).

With regards to the approaches and methods used in moral education, SED (1950) highlight many influences and opportunities that can be found within the primary school for teaching moral education. Examples of where and when these influences and opportunities might be found include the wider school community, the nature and actions of the teachers and head teachers, pupils' day to day conduct and the everyday occurrences within the class and school. SED (1950) claim that "every school activity can make a contribution to the development of character" (p. 97). The following are offered as examples of how this might occur:

> The steady application entailed in mastering a mechanical 'skill' helps to establish habits of industry and to foster pride in

> neat and orderly work. Games, with their opportunities for fair play and for team work, teach lessons of self-control and of cooperation with others. A notable contribution comes from literature and from sacred and secular history; through tales of noble lives and noble deed children can be brought to recognize and to admire such virtues as devotion to duty, courage, self-sacrifice, mercy and loving kindness, and to abhor cowardice, treachery, and other vices. Music, poetry, art and nature study all play their part in enriching the emotional side of character and in developing a love of beauty. Finally, religious instruction and corporate acts of worship may arouse feelings and thoughts which will profoundly influence personality and conduct (p. 97)

This passage links with an earlier assertion made by SED (1950) in their foreword, which states “education is a whole of which the different parts have no nicely delimited frontiers” (p. 4). All of this implies that moral education underpins the fabric of school life, an assertion which has been backed by many other educationalists, such as Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen (1993) and Tom (1984). Chapter 3 makes similar recommendations about the role of the teacher in encouraging and exploring values with pupils through the ways he/she teaches and approaches different areas of the curriculum.

At no point does SED (1950) suggest that moral education should be viewed or taught as a distinct area of the curriculum but rather that it should be taught as and when it arises within all contexts. This definition of moral education

suggests that, at all times, consideration should be given to the moral messages being transmitted within the class and school.

The examples shown in the passage above highlight that SED (1950) were certain about the moral messages to be transmitted and the moral behaviours/qualities to be learned by the pupils. The chapter is peppered with references to values and character traits, which according to SED (1950), pupils should be encouraged to foster. They also make clear which values and traits should be discouraged. The extracts below illustrate this:

- "The pupil should be able to take pleasure in his surroundings and pride in his part in maintaining their order and seemliness" (p. 97)
- "children are helped to shun falsehood, dishonesty, cruelty, or selfishness" (p. 97)
- "There should come a stage when he (the pupil) realizes without further telling that he must , for example, put away his toys, not monopolize the teacher's time, and not be a nuisance to his fellows" (p. 98)
- "If the teacher is to develop in her pupils habits of truthfulness and honesty, she must show trust in them" (p. 98)
- "It is extremely important to train children to respect property" (p. 98)
- "It is also the business of the school to train children in what have been called the minor moralities, such as courtesy and consideration for others" (p. 99)

- "Children should be taught to be kind to animals" (p. 99)

By considering the content of this chapter as a whole it can be argued that SED (1950) provided a set of detailed guidelines for Scottish primary schools in terms of the moral education and training that was to be provided for pupils.

It is, therefore, noticeable that the guidance offered by SED on these matters became subtler in their succeeding publication '*Primary Education in Scotland'* (SED, 1965). This publication is more commonly known as the *Primary Memorandum* and is hailed by many as one of the most influential documents in the development of Scottish education (for examples see Cassidy in Bryce and Humes, 2008, Clark in Clark and Munn, 1997, and Adams in Bryce and Humes, 2003).

The first reference to moral education comes in the preface (SED, 1965, p. ix). Whereas in '*The Primary School in Scotland'* (1950) the term 'moral training' was used to refer to the process that pupils go through in learning to become moral, in the '*Primary Memorandum'* (1965) the term 'social training' is used instead (p. ix). This change in terminology implies an adjustment in the way that pupil conduct is viewed, in that the word 'social' suggests that the pupils' conduct is seen to have an impact upon society and those within it. The idea of 'social training' can be likened to that of 'Citizenship education' in Scottish education today. SED (1965) go on to identify "social and moral education" as an area of importance, which by highlighting both aspects perhaps implies that attention should be given to the development of both the pupils' actions *and* their moral

reasoning. It is argued later that the new '*Curriculum for Excellence*' seeks to revitalise this aim.

Again, SED (1965) identify that it is the responsibility of both the school and home to socially and morally educate children. Unlike in 1950, the responsibility appears to be more balanced and there is no mention of schools having to supplement a lack of moral education in the home. This is not to say that a lack of moral education in some homes was not a problem in 1965 but may indicate a more positive approach in the way that the latter publication was written.

In terms of how social and moral education should be tackled, SED (1965) state that "personal and social relations, the development of judgement and values, are matters which cannot be disassociated from the curriculum generally and all that goes on within the school and classrooms" (p. ix). They explain that, for this reason, they cannot devote a separate section or chapter to the teaching of social and moral education but insist that references are made to it throughout the publication. As suggested, the purpose of approaching social and moral education in this way is to highlight that it cannot be detached from the rest of education. The success of pupils' moral development is attributed to the coming together of many factors within the school and its ethos, as outlined in the following passage:

> The primary school is to an increasing extent concerned with the moral and social education of its pupils. The school routine, the organization of the classroom, the teachers' methods, the content of the programme of work, the conduct of school meals

> and other social occasions, and particularly the outlook and example of the head teacher and teachers, all help to condition the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils (SED, 1965, p. 90).

Arguably one would find it difficult to disagree that these factors impact upon pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The use of the word 'concerned' implies that it should not be supposed that these factors will take care of themselves. This being so, it can be concluded that it is of paramount importance that schools manage these factors correctly. It can also be inferred that every adult who works in and visits the school, not only the head teacher and teachers as mentioned, has a responsibility in the development of pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

It was not the intention of SED (1965) that moral education should become a formal area of the curriculum. Whereas in 1950 SED made no mention of moral education as a formal area of the curriculum, in 1965 their stance was made more explicit when they stated that "the cultivation of desirable habits, attitudes, qualities of character and modes of behaviour cannot be reduced to the level of items on a timetable" (p. 36). It is noteworthy that, although SED (1965) implied that moral education should not be left to take care of itself, they were still confident enough to believe that moral education could be accounted for without featuring as a distinct area of the formal curriculum. The chapter revisits this idea during the discussion of the 5-14 National Guidelines.

Another policy document that has greatly impacted upon religious and moral education in Scotland is *'Moral and Religious Education in Scottish Schools'* (SED,

1972), also commonly known as the *Millar Report*. Hartshorn (in Bryce and Humes, 2008) highlights the importance of this report when he asserts that the Millar Report "set Religious Education on a firm educational footing, based on the intellectual, moral, emotional and religious development of the child" (p. 375). This document was created by a committee appointed by the Secretary of State. The committee's remit included the need to:

> …review the current practice of Scottish schools (other than Roman Catholic schools) with regard to moral and religious education and to make recommendations for its improvement (SED, 1972, p. 5).

That the committee was asked to make recommendations for the *improvement* of religious and moral education in Scottish schools suggests that there was a pre-existing concern surrounding practice.

The committee claimed that "no comparable inquiry on a national scale about the teaching of religious education (or possibly any other subject) in Scotland had been carried out" (SED, 1972, p. 8). It is, therefore, likely that many groups would be interested in the investigation's findings. The committee explained that they chose to focus on religious education, and moral education within the context of religious education. In doing so, Conroy (in Bryce and Humes, 2001) asserts that the committee established "the explicit wedding of Moral and Religious Education" (p. 412). The committee's justification for focusing on moral education as an aspect of religious education was that the scope of their investigation could not have encompassed moral education in its "widest sense"

(p. 6). Yet, it is worth considering if the specific focus on the coupling of moral education and religious education in a report hailed as the first of its kind has succeeded in singling out religious education as the main vehicle for teaching moral education.

In accordance with SED (1950, 1965), the committee describe moral education in the following way:

> There are many parts of the school curriculum and many school activities which could be regarded as part of moral education; in fact one might claim that moral education in its widest sense is the basic function of what goes on in a school – that it is simply another way of talking about education (SED, 1972, p. 6).

Again, this implies that moral education should be a feature of all education but it is a view that is given little reflection throughout the rest of the report. However, the committee briefly tackles moral education as separate from religious education in a questionnaire that they issued to primary head teachers. Head teachers were asked to give a response to the following question:

> Apart from the moral content of religious education and in addition to the general responsibility of every school and every teacher for the development of pupils' character and personality – is any part of the school syllabus set aside specifically for raising and dealing with moral and social

questions at levels appropriate for children? (SED, 1972, p. 15 – 16).

The findings showed that "26% of schools said that moral and social questions were discussed mainly in the context of religious education" (SED, 1972 p. 16). A much higher percentage of schools (78%) selected the response "such question are raised and dealt with incidentally as the occasion arises" (SED, 1972, p. 16). This approach to tackling moral issues suggests that the school's values and/or moral code, and presumably those of individual teachers, had an important function in pupils' moral education. The way in which many schools based the teaching of morality on the incidents that occurred naturally during the school day may be evident of many schools acting upon the advice previously given by SED (1950, 1965).

With regards to moral education, another finding that the inquiry illuminated was that a stark divide existed between those who advocated the teaching of morality through religion/religious education and those who were opposed to this approach. The divide is apparent in the responses given to a set of seven questions that were set out by the committee. The committee invited individuals and groups with an interest in religious and moral education to respond to these questions and to offer further viewpoints where appropriate. As predicted, the invitation was taken up by a range of individuals and groups. The groups and individuals who chose to respond to the three questions that focused directly on moral education are listed here:

- The Aberdeen City Sub-Committee on Moral and Religious Education

- The Scripture Union
- The Aberdeen Humanist Group
- The School Broadcasting Council for Scotland
- The Scottish Unitarian Association
- The Association of County Councils in Scotland
- The Headmasters Association of Scotland
- Mr Robert C. V. Cook
- The Presbytery of Skye
- Professor I. D. Willock, Department of Jurisprudence, University of Dundee
- Mr Ian R. Findlay, Aberdeen College of Education
- The Free Church of Scotland
- Various other humanist groups

From perusal of these names it might be expected that the views expressed would be diverse. Fittingly all of the responses quoted by the committee fall into two distinct categories, which suggests that one cannot remain neutral when it comes to the idea of teaching moral education as part of religion and/or religious education. The responses below highlight the controversial nature of teaching moral education as part of religious education, as uncovered by the inquiry:

> The Scripture Union has this to say: 'Furthermore, moral education in the school situation *cannot* be taught neutrally - the teacher must come down on certain issues and there the Christian viewpoint must surely be represented' (p. 42)

> The Aberdeen Humanist Group on the other hand wants moral education taught objectively and thinks that its link with religious education should be cut. 'We are not convinced that religious education, as at present, has any beneficial effect on the moral standards of pupils, either in the short term or long term and there is some evidence that it may be positively harmful. In any case, we object in particular to the linking of morality with religion, on the grounds that, if the pupils later reject religious dogma they may also reject the morality which is allegedly founded on this dogma' (p. 42)

> The humanists groups call attention to the importance of moral education for the development of the pupil's personality; and understanding of a common sense morality; instruction in citizenship; an appreciation of the fact that morality can have other than a religious basis (p. 43)

> The Headmasters Association of Scotland feels that 'Moral education without reference to religious belief would be an arid, de-personalised and ineffective exercise' (p. 43)

These stances explain why a consensus on the best and most appropriate ways to teach moral education is extremely difficult to reach.

However, even with the diverse views expressed on the teaching of moral education it was necessary for the committee to make proposals for change. A

momentous change to religious and moral education in Scotland, which can be attributed to the Millar Report, is the move away from religious observance and instruction *in* religion to education *about* religion. Conroy (in Bryce and Humes, 2003) explains that the Millar report made clear that the purpose of religious education was to educate pupils about religion and to provide them with a basis for their developing morality. Conroy claims:

> Religious Education was to go on serving a social function with a continuing emphasis on the fundamental and formative place of Bible stories in the growing moral life of children. Thus in public primary schools Religious Education was no longer to be seen as 'denominational'. It was to, instead, reflect and promote a generally ethical form of Christianity as the basis of the public good (p. 412).

In other words, it was the committee's intention that Christianity was to be shown as an example of a 'good' moral life but that it was not to be enforced or practised by non-denominational schools in Scotland. Although this approach provided a move away from teaching children to be moral by teaching them to be Christians, the approach still placed a great emphasis on teaching moral education through religion. In doing so the approach continued to demonstrate a religious life as a moral life and more notably, a moral life as a religious life. This approach did not reflect the views put forward by non-religious groups regarding the teaching of morality independent to religion. The committee acknowledged that their recommendations focused on the teaching of moral education as part of religious education but justified this again by claiming that

it was not in their remit to focus on moral education as a discrete area. The committee also stated that "some teachers feel that the time has come to change from religious education to moral education, but this is not always accompanied by a very clear understanding of what moral education is" (p. 89). One could be forgiven for feeling that, through their recommendations and justifications, the committee chose to stick with what was familiar and on the whole accepted.

Not until 1992 and the introduction of the Scottish National 5 – 14 Guidelines were there any further substantial changes to the way that religious and moral education was taught or regarded. Clark (in Clark and Munn, 1997, p. 7) explains that "the national guidelines in the 5-14 Programme developed between 1987 and 1993 are based on the reports of working parties of professionals closely involved in work in schools". For the first time, the Scottish curriculum for primary education and part of secondary education was dissected and defined in terms of programmes of study, attainment outcomes, strands and attainment targets for each curricular area. Reid (in Bryce and Humes, 2008) claims that the review and formalisation of the primary curriculum was a result of "a distrust of the 'progressive' legacy of the *Primary Memorandum* era" (p. 335). This distrust might explain why the guidelines, although presented as simply that, became something to be adhered to by Scottish schools, as Cassidy (in Bryce and Humes, 2008) testifies:

> It is important to note that the *5-14 Guidelines* and its recommended time allocations very quickly became viewed not as guidelines, but as mandatory strictures that were fully enforced across the primary sector (p. 27).

This quote highlights the impact that the 5-14 National Guidelines have had on Scottish education in general and implies that no curricular area could have remained unaffected. Some of the 5-14 documents were later revised in 2000; however, RME 5-14 (SOED, 1992) has remained in its original form.

Hartshorn (in Bryce and Humes, 2008) describes RME 5 – 14 as "a catalyst for change" (p. 376) and claims that "Primary RME in Scotland came of age with the publication of the 5 – 14 National Guidelines in Religious and Moral Education (SOED, 1992), which identified RME as one of five main curricular areas" (p. 375). RME 5 – 14 introduced moral education as a formal area of the Scottish primary curriculum, as advocated by the *Millar Report*. SOED (1992) justify the link between religious and moral education by stating "all religions stress the importance of morality and give guidance in the form of general principles, codes or rules" and "one could not be religious without being concerned with morality" (p. 2). The latter statement could be disagreed with, particularly in light of the links between extremist views of religion and terrorist activities in recent times. However, as suggested by SOED (1992), to teach religion without reference to and discussion of morality would be difficult, if not undesirable. Arguably to do so would be to provide pupils with a fact file of religions that would leave them with little sense of what religion really means to people. Although it might not be wished that religion be taught without links to morality, SOED (1992) assert that the concept of morality and its development can be tackled without being linked with religion:

> …it is also possible to show moral concern and commitment without necessarily basing these on a religious view of life (p.2).

> Moral education is a function of the whole school, conveyed through other aspects of the curriculum as well as through religious education and transmitted by example and precept through the relationships which exist in the school community. Religious education makes its contribution to moral education and gives it special focus, but has no monopoly over it (p. 2).

In the rationale, SOED (1992) suggest that pupils' moral education should help them to make their own judgements about right and wrong and equip them with the skills to adapt their perceptions of right and wrong when necessary, e.g., in light of "new circumstances and new technology" (p. 2). This recommendation supports a claim made in Chapter 2 about the importance of moral reasoning skills for this purpose. SOED (1992) also list values that pupils should be encouraged to appreciate, these are; "honesty, liberty, justice, fairness and concern for others" (p. 2). It is difficult to say precisely where these values came from but one suspects that they were selected by the members of the Review and Development Group charged with creating the RME 5-14 Guidelines. Few would argue that the values are not desirable but a question can be raised about whether they are any more valid than another set of values. A further list of values for pupils to foster is later given in RME 5-14, these being; "respect, tolerance, empathy" (p. 52). A change to the set of values given for pupils to appreciate in '*Curriculum for Excellence*', as is shown later, adds to

the idea that many different values can be selected and put together to form a meaningful set. Hence, to form a set of values for pupils to foster seems to have little worth. Chapter 3 suggests that sets of values have little worth for teachers either. Conroy (in Bryce and Humes, 2003) also points out that even although a list of values is explicitly given within RME 5-14 there are still contradictions surrounding which values pupils should be encouraged to foster. He states "pupils are invited as a central aim of the programme to develop their own beliefs and attitudes, moral values and practices while at the same time appreciate common values" (p. 415). The worth of providing a list of values is again questioned. Perhaps, RME 5-14 hopes to adopt the 'values communication' approach, as defined in Chapter 3, which would introduce pupils to a range of values but would not dictate which values pupils should foster or in which manner they should foster them.

SOED (1992) attempt to tackle moral education through the attainment outcome of 'Personal Search'. The 'Personal Search' attainment targets show that moral themes and issues can be tackled through the study of religion and independently (SOED, 1992, p. 12 - 13), and it is apparent that that was the intention. The attainment targets show that across the attainment levels of A to E pupils should be encouraged to ask questions about the world and what it is to be human, develop understanding of various values, become aware that different viewpoints exist and begin to form and articulate their own viewpoints. Yet, although the rationale for RME 5-14 states that pupils should learn about and make judgements based on 'right' and 'wrong', a closer inspection of the attainment targets reveals that there is no mention of these

concepts. It could be argued that the concepts of 'right' and 'wrong' should be regarded as the fundamental basis of morality and hence, moral education. Chapter 1 illustrates that although there may not be consensus on how moral education might be taught, there is agreement that a concern for 'right' and 'wrong' should be at its core.

Hartshorn (in Bryce and Humes, 2008) identifies a fault in RME 5 – 14, which may explain why the development of a sense of right and wrong was omitted from the attainment targets:

> Instead of attempting to measure what is deemed worthy of being taught, what is taught is a function of what can be measured. This is particularly damaging in an area like RME, where cognitive and affective targets are equally important, and where Personal Search is neither linear nor susceptible to simple measurement (p. 376)

The need to base pupils' moral development on measurable outcomes has been problematic for the curriculum designers of RME 5-14 but one argues that this presents an even greater challenge for teachers. Consideration of how success in moral education might be determined is given in previous chapters. It can be argued that an emphasis on measurable outcomes reflects a drive for effectiveness and productivity, which could have a detrimental effect on the teaching of moral education.

As mentioned, 'Programmes of Study' for each curricular area are a feature of the 5-14 National Guidelines. The purpose of the programmes of study was to provide schools and more specifically teachers with ideas and examples of how the proposed strands and attainment targets might be approached and taught. Accordingly programmes of study were provided for the 'Personal Search' outcome, which give guidance on how each attainment target might be planned for, resourced and approached as part of the formal curriculum. Yet, there appears to be no guidance offered to teachers on how they might deal with the moral issues and dilemmas that pupils face in their day-to-day lives or as part of the informal curriculum. Since no guidance is given it can be assumed that teachers have to make their own judgements about how best to deal with pupils' moral issues and dilemmas, and it is presumed that they will know how to do this. This goes against the recommendations made by Carr (1993), who asserts that if teachers are to be made responsible for imparting values and influencing pupils' morality then "the only real option open to us is to ensure that courses of essentially moral and evaluative enquiry about each and every ethical dimension of education and teaching are located at the heart of the professional education and training of teachers" (p. 207). This recommendation seems particularly important since Chapter 3 suggests that teachers might not always be equipped with the necessary skills to deal with such situations.

Another recommendation of RME 5 – 14 was that a minimum 10% time allocation of the primary curriculum be given to RME. The publication of '*The Structure and Balance of the Curriculum*' (Scottish Executive, 2000a) brought a change to this and saw RME, PSD and health education grouped together and

allocated a minimum of 15% of teaching and learning time. The grouping together of these curricular areas implies that links can be made between these subjects, perhaps through exploring similar themes and tackling comparable aims. For example, Scottish Executive (2000b) states:

> Health education should aim to enable young people to explore and clarify their beliefs, attitudes and values… (p. 3)
>
> The characteristics, values and behaviours of all members of the school community contribute to the ethos, with positive relationships between staff and pupils being crucial elements (p. 7).

Whilst, SOED (1993) give the following as aims for Personal and Social Development:

> …identify, review and evaluate the values they (the pupils) and society hold and recognize that these affect thoughts and actions (p.1).
>
> There is a potential conflict between some of the values in society, the school and the home, but there is also a considerable degree of consensus on social and moral values such as honesty, liberty, justice, fairness and respect for others. It is important that such values are recognized and made explicit in schools through establishing a caring attitude in the

way in which all members of the school community treat each other and their environment (p. 2).

…pupils should be helped to clarify their own personal values and determine their own position in relation to that held by other people, groups or society at large (p. 2).

It is apparent that there is a shared approach to values across the areas of RME, PSD and health education emphasising that moral education presents itself through other curricular areas. Further links can be made across the curriculum. The table below highlights how the 5-14 curriculum supports the teaching of moral education through other curricular areas:

| Curricular Area | Links with moral education |
|---|---|
| English Language | - English language learning and teaching should "support pupils' personal development through language and literature, including intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, social and moral development" (SOED, 1991, p. 5).<br>- Through literature pupils of all ages can encounter and explore moral dilemmas and diverse viewpoints.<br>- English language learning and teaching should "provide experiences for developing pupils' capacities to communicate, think, feel and make through language" (*ibid*.).<br>- Through functional writing pupils can investigate issues of a moral/ethical nature and present their ideas and opinions. |
| Environmental Studies – Health Education | - An expected progression for pupils from Level A to F is that their "appreciation of moral and ethical issues will develop" (Scottish Executive, 2000b, p. 8).<br>- "While acquiring knowledge is important for informed decision making and other skills development, attitude and values clarification remains an integral part of the process" (Scottish Executive, 2000c, p. 21).<br>- "While they (pupils) do need information about issues such as |

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| | puberty, pregnancy, family roles and sexually transmitted infections, information alone will not be enough. It is necessary to provide them with the skills to cope with pressure and conflicts and to manage their relationships" (*ibid*.).<br>- "The aims of drug education in schools are prevention of drug misuse, the promotion of healthy lifestyles, and the development of knowledge, skills and values to help young people make responsible health choices (Scottish Executive, 2000c, p. 35). |
| Environmental Studies – Social Subjects | - "The distinctive nature of learning in social subjects allows pupils to develop an open and enquiring mind and a sense of empathy. They become increasingly able to view situations from another person's perspective, whether that person has lived at a different time or is a contemporary living in a different country or in different social circumstances. This in turn allows pupils to become critically aware of their own attitudes and values to respect those of others." (Scottish Executive, 2000d, p. 25).<br>- The study of Social Subjects lends itself to exploration of:<br>• historic events, including the way that people have been treated in the past, e.g., the Suffragettes, the Holocaust.<br>• different cultures, different ways of life and issues surrounding the use of the world's resources, e.g., rainforest clearances, over-fishing.<br>• human rights and responsibilities and the conflicts that exist between people. |
| Environmental Studies – Science and Technology | - "Through their experiences of science, pupils are helped to adopt a disposition to act responsibly and in a balanced way in relation to scientific issues" (Scottish Executive, 2000d, p. 45).<br>- "Progressively across levels A-F, pupils should be encouraged to develop an awareness of and positive attitudes to:<br>• the need to develop informed and reasoned opinions on the impact of science in relation to social, environmental, moral and ethical issues<br>• the development of responsible attitudes that take account of different beliefs and values<br>• thinking through the various consequences for living things and for the environment of different choices, decisions and courses of action<br>• the need for conservation of scarce energy resources and endangered species at local and global level" (Scottish |

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|---|---|
| | Executive, 2000d, p. 62).<br><br>- Technology "is an intrinsic part of all cultures, and reflects and shapes the values and beliefs of the wider cultural context – past, present and future." (Scottish Executive, 2000d, p. 65).<br>- "Pupils need opportunities to develop ideas about, for example, responsible citizenship, sustainable developments, and moral and ethical consideration resulting from their own and others' actions" (Scottish Executive, 2000d, p. 76).<br>- "Progressively across levels A-F, pupils should be encouraged to develop an awareness of, and positive attitudes to:<br>• the notion that ideas and solutions, which although satisfying some, might be unacceptable to others<br>• the interplay between meeting people's needs through the use of materials, money and time and conserving and improving the quality of the natural environment through minimizing the harmful effects of actions" (*ibid.).* |
| Information and Communication Technology | - "As pupils progress through levels A-F they increasingly appreciate when it is and is not appropriate to use ICT" (Scottish Executive, 2000e, p. 14 - 15).<br>- The above attitude is exemplified by Scottish Executive (2000f, p. 22):<br><br>- "Have appreciation of why computers/ICT require varying levels of security, with respect to, unauthorised access to private information, invasion of privacy, nuclear arms, viruses/bugs."<br>- "Have appreciation of why the following legislation has been introduced as a result of increased use of computers/ICT: Computer Misuse Act, Data Protection Act."<br>- "Have appreciation of the responsibilities that society has in using computers/ICT/internet, focusing on issues such as racism, terrorism, threats to young people." |
| Citizenship Education | - "As a result of their learning experiences, young people should become progressively more able to respond in imaginative ways to social, moral and political dilemmas and challenges." (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2002, p. 14)<br>- "Specific, key learning experiences that contribute to education for citizenship are:<br>• exploration of social and moral issues and dilemmas through discussions and case studies that require use of |

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| | evidence and the construction of defensible arguments" (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2002, p. 18) |

The table illustrates that there are just as many topics and themes within a range of curricular areas that, as with the study of religion, are laden with moral and ethical issues and require a consideration of morality for fuller understanding. Therefore it is argued that moral education could easily form a part of many other curricular areas in the same way that it has been with religious education. It is suggested that a greater emphasis on moral education running through all curricular areas is required. An analysis of the new '*Curriculum for Excellence*' determines whether greater scope has been given for teachers to tackle moral education in this way.

Moral education: what next?

In 2002 the Scottish Executive held a 'National Debate on Education'. Learning and Teaching Scotland (2008a) describe the National Debate as "an extensive consultation exercise on the state of school education". The following statement made by The Curriculum Review Group (2004), a group set up by the Scottish government to build the foundations for the new Scottish curriculum, summarises the main findings of the National Debate:

> In the debate, many people – pupils, parents, teachers, employers and others – said that they valued and wanted to keep many aspects of the current curriculum. Some also made compelling arguments for changes to ensure all our young people achieve successful outcomes and are equipped to

> contribute effectively to the Scottish economy and society, now and in the future (p. 6).

As a result, a review of the Scottish curriculum has been carried out and the new '*Curriculum for Excellence'* (CfE) is now being implemented in Scottish schools. '*Curriculum for Excellence'* differs from the 5-14 curriculum in that it encompasses education for 3 to 18 years olds. In other words, '*Curriculum for Excellence'* provides a "single curriculum" (The Curriculum Review Group, 2004, p. 4) which guides pupils' pre-school, primary and secondary education. Another defining feature of the new curriculum is that it presents a single set of values for pupils' education, which according to the The Curriculum Review Group (2004, p. 10) should "underpin policies, practice and the curriculum itself". These values are "wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity" (*ibid*., p. 11). The Curriculum Review Group (2004, p. 11) gives the origin of these values when they state "the words which are inscribed on the mace of the Scottish Parliament have helped to define values for our democracy". They explain that values have a very important place in education and that a main aim of education should be:

> …to make our young people aware of the values on which Scottish society is based and so help them to establish their own stances on matters of social justice and personal and collective responsibility. Young people therefore need to learn about and develop these values (The Curriculum Review Group, 2004, p. 11).

The Curriculum Review Programme Board (2006, p. 1) claim that the values set out in '*Curriculum for Excellence*' were well received by "almost everyone with whom we have spoken". However, it is not entirely clear with whom the board had spoken. Gillies (2006) questions the origin and significance of the values offered as a basis for '*Curriculum for Excellence*'. He writes:

> One could ask why should words inscribed on an ornamental object in a parliament building be the basis for a state education curriculum? The words – 'wisdom, justice, compassion, integrity' – were devised by the maker of the mace for the nation's elected politicians, as a reminder of some key values which he thought they should keep in the forefront of their decision making and at the heart of their legislation. It is hard to see in what way such operational guidelines for politicians are, firstly, relevant to curriculum design, and, secondly in any sense definitive of national values (p. 31).

Gillies (2006) argues that there are many values that could be chosen to represent the ideals of Scottish education and Scottish society. He implies that to create a shortlist of values excludes a great many values that are just as important:

> Certainly, the terms are appropriate for a democracy and therefore, for a curriculum for schooling within a democracy but there are probably several hundred such words which could equally be applied to no great effect (p. 31 – 32).

Chapters 2 and 3 consider the difficulties of forming and adhering to a set of shared values, particularly in terms of the different ways that values can be put into practice. It is argued that by offering a set of values, upon which Scottish society is said to be based, attention is distracted away from a meaningful debate about how the matter of values should be tackled. It can be argued that a further opportunity for debate has been missed by '*Curriculum for Excellence'* in failing to encourage a well thought through account of what it is to be Scottish in, what is arguably, a multi cultural society. This thesis recommends that a greater consideration for Scottish society as a multi cultural and liberal democratic society is needed for education on values and other moral education to proceed in a meaningful way.

So what does '*Curriculum for Excellence*' recommend for moral education? The Curriculum Review Programme Board (2006) explains that during the early stages of the review "groups were established in eight curriculum areas: science, languages, social subjects, mathematics, technologies, expressive arts, health and wellbeing, and religious and moral education" (p. 26). It is apparent that some of the previous curricular areas from the 5-14 curriculum have been dissected to form distinct areas, e.g., the 5 – 14 curricular area of Environmental Studies (Scottish Executive, 2000d) is represented by four distinct curricular areas in '*Curriculum for Excellence*', these being science, technologies, health and well being, and social subjects. However, at a time when attention has been given to dissecting areas of the curriculum, religious and moral education have remained combined. It can be argued that the continued coupling of religious and moral education suggests that moral education should predominantly be

approached through the context of religion and succeeds in highlighting it as a formal area of the curriculum.

In terms of the review of RME one argues that, on the whole, the essence of the curricular area also remains the same. The cover paper, outcomes and experiences for RME can be found by accessing the following link:

http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/rme/nondenominational/index.asp

The new RME curriculum is separated into three main areas, which are 'Christianity', 'Other World Religions' and 'Development of Beliefs and Values'. The review shows that the need for pupils to develop "moral judgement" and "moral values" (Scottish Executive, 2006, p. 22) endures, although the moral values to be developed have been adapted to reflect the core values of the curriculum and those identified by the RME review group. The values of "caring, sharing, fairness, equality and love" (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2008b, p. 8) are highlighted as values which pupils should be able to show understanding of. Again, it would seem that only a few important values out of many possibilities are highlighted.

As with RME 5-14, it is suggested that morality can be explored and taught independently from religion. Scottish Executive (2006, p. 22) state that "religious and moral education enables children and young people to explore the world's major religions and approaches to living which are independent of religious belief". The cover paper emphasizes the important role that religion plays in society but also highlights the contribution made by non-religious stances.

However, the structuring of the three main areas of the new RME curriculum and changes to the 'Personal Search' element of RME again suggest that pupils' exploration and development of values will mainly be carried out through the study of religion. It is intended that 'Personal Search' should no longer be represented as its own area of the RME curriculum but that instead it should "permeate" (Scottish Executive, 2006, p. 25) the areas of 'Christianity' and 'Other World Religions'. Scottish Executive (2006, p. 25) explain that "the process of personal search will recognise that not all children will adopt a religious standpoint, although many will". The addition of "although many will" again gives a sense that personal search will on the whole be carried out through the study of religion. An interim report compiled by University of Glasgow (4 November 2008), which represented the views of an RME focus group, shows that concerns were expressed about the imbalance between religious and non-religious stances in the early planning stages of the curriculum. Participants of the focus group were concerned that "explicitly religious, rather than moral issues, receive a disproportionate amount of attention in the revised curriculum" (University of Glasgow, 2008, p. 3). More specifically one participant stated:

> the non religious views that are flagged in the paper can disappear under the radar in the outcomes....Non-religious views appear as a shadow of religious content and I feel that excludes a lot of people actually (*ibid*.)

A similar view was recently expressed in the press by Nixon (2008):

> Though study of non-religious views is sanctioned in the outcomes, it is in the context of considering religious responses to questions and issues, giving the impression that non-religious views are a negative shadow to theological responses. This marginalising of non-religious views, to which a third of Scots subscribe, effectively excludes those who follow these philosophies (p. 25).

The RME review group has attempted to address these concerns in subsequent drafts of the RME outcomes and experiences but it can be argued that the emphasis remains on the exploration of religious viewpoints, and that non-religious views could still easily be forgotten or omitted. In this way '*Curriculum for Excellence*' does not seem to do enough to take account of the diverse values and viewpoints represented in Scotland's multi cultural, liberal democratic society.

A more positive facet of RME in '*Curriculum for Excellence*' is that pupils are to be encouraged to not only formulate their own views on moral issues but to act upon their views as well. This is a change to the outcomes recommended by RME 5-14, which did not require pupils to take moral action. Many philosophers argue that an ultimate aim of moral education must be to encourage pupils to act morally, as well as to think and reason morally (for examples see Chapter 1). The idea of encouraging moral action was touched upon by SED (1965) and has clearly been readopted by '*Curriculum for Excellence*'. According to Scottish Executive (2006), pupils' education must also

aim to equip them with the skills to make moral decisions and provide opportunities for pupils to test these skills. These new aims are reflected in the following statements:

> Learning through religious and moral education enables children and young people to…
>
> - develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking, and deciding how to act when making moral decisions
> - develop their beliefs, attitudes, moral values and practices through personal search, discovery and critical evaluation, and make a positive difference to the world by putting their beliefs and values into action (p. 22).
>
> By considering moral and ethical questions in a secure environment, children and young people can develop their own ability to make moral and ethical judgements about right and wrong. They can learn to act with concern for others and for the world we live in (p. 23).
>
> One of the most important outcomes of learning through religious and moral education is that children and young people put their values and beliefs into action in positive ways which benefit others in the local, national and global communities (p. 23).

Through his studies of moral development, Kohlberg highlights that while a pupil's moral judgement might show development, his/her capacity for moral behaviour may remain the same (Power, Higgins and Kohlberg, 1989, p. 19). This suggests that measuring an individual's moral judgement and his/her resulting moral behaviours might be problematic. Pring (2001) maintains that a teacher's moral role can be threatened when schools are forced to concentrate on what, in terms of pupils' learning, is measurable. Hartshorn (in Bryce and Humes, 2008, p. 376) confirms that the drive to incorporate only measurable outcomes in RME 5-14 has previously been "damaging" to the curricular area. Hence, it is pleasing that the Scottish government has now chosen to emphasise the importance of enabling children to reason, think and act morally, even although these abilities might be difficult to measure.

But what opportunities does '*Curriculum for Excellence*' offer for teachers to help pupils to develop morally throughout the rest of the curriculum? While it was necessary to cross reference the 5-14 national guidelines to make links between moral education and other curricular areas, '*Curriculum for Excellence*' gives more specific guidance on how religious and moral education impacts upon and draws from other curricular areas. Scottish Executive (2006) states:

> - There are important connections between themes in religious and moral education and, for example, in history, science and the arts (p. 23).
> - Religious and moral education makes an important contribution to the personal and social development of children and young people. The development of secure values and

> beliefs plays an important part in children and young people's emotional and spiritual wellbeing (p. 23).
>
> - There is considerable scope for connections between themes and learning in religious and moral education and other areas of the curriculum. For example, there will be important synergies between many aspects of health and wellbeing and religious and moral education. An understanding of the influences of religion in Scotland is important in understanding the history of Scotland and features of its culture and institutions today (p. 24).

While the RME cover paper (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2008c) adds:

> There are also strong connections with learning for citizenship, enterprise, international education, creativity and sustainable development (p. 4).

If used appropriately, the strong curricular links that RME affords might provide opportunities for pupils to develop their moral reasoning skills, moral attitudes and understanding of moral issues through a diverse range of contexts. This approach to tackling moral education could allow for a more even balance between exploring morality as a feature of religion and exploring morality in its own right. However, based on the '*Curriculum for Excellence*' guidelines it might be speculated that many teachers will continue to feel it necessary for their teaching of moral education to be planned for, and often planned within the context of religious education. This might mean that teachers miss valuable opportunities to tackle moral issues as they arise and/or to explore values

through the very practices that they encourage pupils to participate in. Cassidy (2007) shares a concern for moral issues being timetabled into the curriculum. She states that 'Citizenship Education' (which has been shown to have linking concerns with moral education) has been created in exactly this way:

> Even the notion of the classes, set aside, compartmentalized times for certain issues to be raised is peculiar. Issues affecting our personhood and/or our citizenhood permeate all areas of our lives and within school (and outside) there should be opportunities to discuss and explore these matters (p. 157 - 158).

Certainly, it would seem that more could have been done within '*Curriculum for Excellence*' to emphasise moral education as a feature of all education and as a function of the teacher's everyday role. The guidelines do suggest that teachers must consider the experiences that pupils have in their lives outside of school and that as a result links should be fostered with "the home, the faith community to which a child may belong, and the local community more broadly" (Scottish Executive, 2006, p. 23 – 24). However, no guidance is offered to teachers on how they might go about fostering such links, or how they might deal with value conflicts should they arise. Chapter 3 suggests that in order for teachers to feel that their moral role is worthwhile and valued they must be supported by a higher authority. It can be surmised that the limited amount of guidance that is offered to Scottish teachers might leave many feeling uncertain about how best to fulfill their role as moral educators and about what extent the Scottish government supports them in their role.

Finally, the moral influences of the whole school, as touched on by SED (1950, 1965), appear to have been overshadowed by '*Curriculum for Excellence*'. The earlier idea that "moral education in its widest sense is the basic function of what goes on in a school" (SED, 1972, p. 6) seems to have been lost by 5 – 14 and '*Curriculum for Excellence*' in their attempt to define learning in terms of curricular areas and in mostly measurable outcomes. It can be concluded that the approaches to moral education advocated in '*Curriculum for Excellence*' fail to really grasp the purposes and extent of moral education. As in Chapter 3, it is suggested that there is a need for moral education to be properly understood by the Scottish government. It is proposed that it is necessary to return to the idea that moral education is a feature of everything that teachers do and everything that pupils learn. Furthermore, it can be argued that a proper appreciation of moral philosophy and liberal democratic politics is required by policy makers and educators for a well thought out and more robust approach to moral education to be possible.

This thesis offers one possible approach to moral education based on an appreciation of and sustained theorizing about the philosophical bases of morality and liberal democracy. Chapter 5 explores and develops the proposed approach and suggests that it should be considered as a small practical way forward for moral education in Scottish primary education. The approach intends to offer teachers a means of attending to moral education within a variety of contexts and will reaffirm moral education as an important facet of everyday school life.

## Chapter Five - The Use of Stories, TV and Film in Moral Education

This chapter begins by exploring the use of traditional stories, fairy tales and modern stories to teach moral education and to promote moral development. It shows that the use of stories to teach moral education is an historic and well established practice. The benefits of using stories in moral education are discussed. Particular consideration is given to an approach that draws upon the use of 'instructional conversations' about stories to enhance pupils' moral development (Clare et al, 1996). The chapter proposes that for stories to be used successfully in moral education teachers must be equipped with appropriate skills. It is suggested that while some individuals are naturally more suited and better equipped to morally educate children, improved teacher education is also necessary to enhance particular skills.

The chapter then examines the possibility of using TV and film in a similar way to stories in moral education. It is suggested that there is great potential for using TV programmes and films to enhance children's moral development. However, the chapter emphasises that children should not be left to interpret moral messages on their own. A proposal that stories, TV and film create part of a common culture between home and school is presented. The chapter concludes by offering suggestions as to how this approach might offer one possible way forward for teachers and parents to share in the process of moral education and in guiding children's moral development. However, the chapter acknowledges that other approaches are necessary too, particularly since this thesis emphasises

moral education as a feature of all education and not simply as an area of the formal curriculum.

The Idea of Story-Telling

Bryan (2005, p. 3) claims that "the use of children's literature has been well established as a resource for teaching all areas of the curriculum". It can be suggested that the practice of using stories and novels to teach moral education has also become 'well established' and widely accepted based on the range of available literature promoting its use. This chapter outlines some of the available literature.

Jenkins (1997) traces the use of literature to teach about and promote morality from as early as Platonic times to the "twentieth-century classroom" (p. 71). She implies that the practice of using stories is not a new one:

> He (Plato) especially understood the power of story to teach children the enduring lessons of a moral life, observing that children not only delight in story but also appropriate the actions of characters during play (p. 67).

Chapter 1 explains that Aristotle's philosophy supports the idea that stories can be used to pass on lessons about moral life by those considered virtuous and wise.

Yet, it seems that throughout history stories have not always been accepted as a vehicle for teaching moral education. Jenkins (1997) explains that Rousseau's

discouragement of the use of literature to teach morality and Dewey's warnings against it (both theorists advocated a more practical approach to moral education), as well as the growing debate about how best to teach children to read meant that stories were not explored or used to their full potential during much of the twentieth century. According to Jenkins (1997), the use of stories to teach moral education might have continued to be neglected if not for the publication of two texts, which championed the "moral power of children's literature" (Jenkins, 1997, p. 73). These were *The Moral Life of Children* (Coles, 1986) and *First Lessons: A Report on Elementary Education* in America (Bennett, 1986). Vitz (1990, p. 716) testifies to the significance of Coles' work and explains that it allows one to accept that "a very effective way to introduce children to the moral life, short of actually placing them in morally challenging situations, is to have them hear, read or watch morally challenging narratives". It could be argued that to expose children to morally challenging situations through narrative, while less practical, might be more ethical than to place them in actual moral situations.

It is evident that the recommendations on the use of stories in moral education have been drawn upon. One example is provided by Leming (2000, p. 413) who gives details of "a popular literature-based character education programme", which was introduced in America in the 1990s with the intent of teaching children ethical values through stories (for more information on the Heartwood Institute see http://www.heartwoodethics.org/). Acceptance of the use of stories in moral education is also been highlighted by the range of materials created for teachers. Guidance is available to teachers on how they might select appropriate

materials for moral education, as well as giving lists of suitable stories and books to choose from (for examples see Koc and Buzzelli, 2004; Guroian, 2002). In addition, other writers offer practical suggestions on how teachers might use such stories in exploration and discussion with their pupils (for examples see Upright, 2002; Darling, 2002; Winston, 2000; Ellis and Grogan, 2003). The next section of this chapter determines what stories can offer to moral education and children's moral development.

The Use of Stories in Moral Education

Zbikowski and Collins (1994) refer to literature as a "moral laboratory" (p. 3). They claim that within this laboratory "the ethical and moral dimensions of human actions can be readily perceived and thought about" (p. 4). They insist that when readers do this they conduct "thought experiments" (p. 10), which help the reader to consider why characters behave the way they do and what impact and consequences their actions have.

Zbikowski and Collins (1994) propose that if literature is viewed in this way then "moral education would use literature not to inculcate values, not to impress a specific moral code, but to facilitate both the construction of values and a sympathetic engagement with the experience of others" (p. 11). This suggestion links with a claim made by Upright (2002) that stories can be used to teach empathy to pupils. Hoffman (2000) and Slote (2007) argue that the development of empathy is essential in one's development of morality. The importance of

empathy in moral development can be linked to theories on 'caring morality' and ethics of care as developed by Noddings (1984).

Another benefit of using stories is offered by Lamme (1996) who implies that the scope for using stories in moral education is wide ranging. She asserts that "virtually every ethical issue and moral character trait found in society is also found in current children's fictional literature" (p. 415). Thus, stories hold much potential for discussion of and exposure to moral issues, dilemmas and situations. Lamme (1996) suggests that biographical and autobiographical literature could also be used to provide pupils with "examples of ethical and moral living" (p. 416) and may even be better received by some pupils since they portray the lives of "real people" (p. 417).

One type of story, which at one time or another has been both commended and outlawed (Bettelheim, 1976, p.120) for its moral content, is the traditional fairy tale. Zipes (1999, p. 2 - 3) claims that it is "extremely difficult to define exactly what a fairy tale is", yet the focus of this section makes it important to attempt to do so. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2008) defines a fairy tale as:

> a**:** a story (as for children) involving fantastic forces and beings (as fairies, wizards, and goblins)
> b: a story in which improbable events lead to a happy ending
> (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fairy-tale)

The inclusion of fantastic and mythical characters, such as fairies, goblins and wizards, makes it easy to see why children for centuries have enjoyed fairy tales.

Yet what do they offer children in terms of their moral development? And why have fairy tales previously been so heavily criticised? Unfortunately the full argument surrounding the use of fairy tales to promote morality is out with the scope of this chapter (for more information see Zipes, 1991, 1997, 2002; Kohl, 2007, and Bettelheim, 1976). However, a brief summary of the argument is now given.

Bryan (2005) asserts that fairy tales are filled with moral and ethical content. She successfully exemplifies this through her analysis of a selection of fairy tales written by the Brothers Grimm. By providing examples of these fairy tales and through discussion of the moral messages that they transmit, Bryan (2005) implies that fairy tales can be both Aristotelian and Kantian in their nature. For example, Bryan states that the tale of 'The Frog Prince' is underpinned by the moral message:

> We must accept the commitments that we make regardless of the circumstances under which they were made (p. 4).

In this particular story, the commitment was a promise. Hence, the moral message given appears to tie in with Kant's idea of duty and of adhering to the categorical imperatives that one makes for oneself.

Bryan (2005) also concludes that the actions of the characters within fairy tales express "the virtues of kindness, sweetness, love, courage, endurance, obedience, caring, consideration and loyalty" (p. 5). No doubt one could find examples of a number of other virtues that are modelled by the characters in fairy tales. Thus, it

can be argued that fairy tales provide an account of virtuous activity. In line with Aristotle's theory that one can only become truly virtuous by taking part in virtuous activity, it might be suggested that fairy tales provide a model for children to begin with. This seems fitting considering that Inglis (1993, cited in Winston, 1998, p. 23) "sees stories as the only resource we have left to provide us with moral guidance". Zipes (1991) claims that this was the principle aim of fairy tales. He explains that:

> Almost all critics who have studied the emergence of the literary fairy tales in Europe agree that educated writers purposely appropriated the oral folk tale and converted it into a type of literary discourse about mores, values and manners so that children would become civilized according to the social code of that time (p. 3).

Despite this, Koc and Buzzelli (2004) argue that fairy tales do not encourage children to think about how to act, instead they simply *tell* them what to do or how to behave. They assert that "this style of literature does not encourage children to go beyond their moral stage" (p. 94). This being the case, it might be argued that it would be difficult for a child to transfer what he/she has learned about 'right' and 'wrong' from fairy tales to other more modern situations. In fact, Bettelheim (1976, p. 116 - 119) explains that fairy tales were outlawed for a time as it was claimed that they were untruthful, unrealistic and whimsical.

Bettelheim (1976) declares:

> …some parents fear that their children may get carried away by their fantasies; that when exposed to fairy tales, they will come to believe in magic… other parents fear that a child's mind may become so overfed by fairy-tale fantasies as to neglect learning to cope with reality (p. 118).

Lamme (1996) might argue, however, that such controversy may not be negative, since she maintains that "books that do not offend anybody probably will not move anybody either" (p. 412). The condemnation of fairy tales throughout time suggests that they should give one a lot to think about.

An argument, which seems to counter Koc and Buzzelli's (2004) concerns, is provided by Binnendyk and Schonert-Reichl (2002) in their appraisal of the 'Harry Potter' stories written by J. K. Rowling. They claim that the series of "Harry Potter stories are classic fairy tales – that is, stories that revolve around the struggle of good versus evil and moral obligation" (p. 195). Like other fairy tales, complaints about the magical content of the Harry Potter novels have been voiced (Black, 2003). However, as well as detailing the fictional use of magic, it can also be argued that the stories portray elements of modern day life, for example, Harry and his friends must attend school, sit exams, face bullies and attempt to maintain friendships. Hence, these modern day fairy tales provide more contemporary contexts for children to relate to. Binnendyk and Schonert-Reichl (2002) and Black (2003) support this claim when they explain that the Harry Potter novels can provide examples of moral dilemmas for children to

empathise with and explore. Binnendyk and Schonert-Reichl (2002) also put forward that Kohlberg's moral stages (1984) are reflected in the way that each of the main characters in the series behave and reason, for example:

> Draco Malfoy, Harry's archenemy, best characterises a Stage Two reasoner displaying an individualistic, instrumental purpose orientation. For Malfoy, what is right is that which will satisfy his own personal, concrete needs. This is illustrated in his continued focus on the accumulation of house points for their own sake with little regard for moral cooperation and human relationships (p. 198).

The authors propose that through careful selection of the characters' actions "teachers could scaffold discussions that challenge students to think beyond their current level of moral reasoning" (p. 200). This concept is supported by Clare et al (1996) and is further examined later in the chapter.

Bettelheim (1976), one of the main advocates of the use of fairy tales to teach children about morality, argues that fairy tales give messages that the recipient can apply to his/her own life and personal dilemmas. The word 'recipient' rather than 'reader' is used since Bettelheim (1976, p. 150) insists that fairy tales should be told rather than read. Bettelheim (1976) implies that fairy tales have a medicinal quality:

> The fairy tale is therapeutic because the patient finds his *own* solutions, through contemplating what the story seems to imply about him and his inner conflicts at this moment in his life (p. 25).

It is for this reason that Bettelheim (1976) advises that fairy tales are told rather than read, for this allows the storyteller "greater flexibility" (p. 150). In other words, the storyteller can adapt the content and emphasis of the fairy tale to suit the moral needs of the listener, making his/her experience more worthwhile. The adaptability of fairy tales and stories in general has suggests advantages for their use with different groups of pupils.

However, there might be cause to be wary of using stories in such a way. Narvaez (2002) concurs with Bettelheim's assertion that children extract different meanings and messages from texts. She argues that this is the case with stories in general, not only fairy tales. However, Narvaez (2002) considers this a reason for being cautious about the use of stories in the development of morality. She argues that since children do not extract the same meaning or messages from texts, they could pick up messages that are undesirable, for example:

> The story about Jacob and Esau in Genesis can be interpreted as: "God loves cheaters better" or "Do anything to get what you want" or "Cleverness is more important than hard work (p. 164).

Narvaez (2002) goes on to suggest that once a child has extracted his/her own meaning from the text it will be very hard to encourage the child to embrace a new meaning. She claims:

> The child lacks the flexibility to accommodate to new viewpoints. The child listens to the adult but remembers, perhaps with some self-doubt, the feeling and the message received… it is hard to change the mind of a child before he or she has the cognitive tools to change in the desired directions (p. 165).

Narvaez bases her conclusions on the findings reported in Narvaez et al (1999). This study sought to measure children's ability "to extract the theme from a moral story" (p. 479). The 132 participants, who included children of approximately 8 and 10 years, were required to listen to and read along with a number of stories. After each story the children were asked to indicate, through a variety of tasks, what message they felt that the author was attempting to communicate (for more specific task details see p. 481). Narvaez et al (1999) found that "there were significant differences in comprehending the moral themes" (p. 481). However, they also reported that "with increasing age, correct performance improves" (p. 482). Narvaez et al (1999) clearly state that these findings should not be used as reasons to forbid the use of moral stories. Rather the researchers urge educators to be cautious and "aware of children's differential interpretations of stories that seem perfectly clear to adults" (p. 483). They also urge that any curriculum based on the use of moral stories "should be thoroughly pilot tested to gauge what is understood by the target audience" (*ibid.)*. As well as having implications for policy makers who have the power to put such a curriculum in place, the former suggestion also has implications for the skills required by the teacher, which are later discussed in greater detail.

A study which strongly supports the use of literature and stories in moral education is presented by Clare et al (1996). While conducting research on the improvement of reading comprehension in American elementary schools, Clare et al (1996) found that "joint explorations of the meaning of stories" (p. 326) not only improve reading comprehension but assist with moral development too. As part of their study, Clare et al (1996) worked with a class and their teacher to introduce, what they term 'instructional conversations'. They define these as:

> … simply excellent discussion – focused, interesting and engaging. Teacher and students learn how to present provocative ideas and experiences, learn how to build on, challenge or extend each other's contributions, and learn how to engage and wrestle with complex ideas as they explore each other's textual interpretations (p. 328).

Clare et al (1996) liken instructional conversations to an approach adopted by Kolhberg. Power (1988, p. 196) refers to this as "the moral discussion approach", and explains that Kohlberg and his student Blatt worked on the approach together. An outline of the theory behind the moral discussion approach is given by Power et al (1989):

> He (Blatt) reasoned that the most effective and least artificial way to 'expose' children to moral judgement one stage above their own would be to have a group discussion of moral dilemmas in which group member who were at different stages would hear one another's resolutions to the dilemmas. In trying to convince one

> another of why their resolutions were best, children would thereby expose the others to their stages of reasoning (p. 11).

Throughout the course of a year, Clare et al (1996) tracked the progress of the instructional conversations using interviews, video tapes of lessons and samples of students' follow up writing. They found that through use of appropriately selected literature, instructional conversations and skilled teacher input a 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) can be created which can help pupils reason at a moral stage above their own. ZPD is a concept created by Vygotsky, which he explains in the following way:

> The difference between the level of task that can be performed with the help of adults and the level of the tasks that can be solved with independent activity is what defines the zone of proximal development of the child (1984, p. 112, cited by Rosa and Montero in Moll, 1990, p. 79).

In relation to moral education, Clare et al (1996) imply, although do not confirm, that with appropriately selected literature, instructional conversations and skilled teacher input, a student who can comfortably reason at stage 2 on his own could be assisted and guided to reason at stage 3. This being true, the approach could offer many benefits to moral education in schools.

Tappan (1998) agrees that drawing upon Vygotsky's theory of ZPD alongside the use of narratives offers many benefits for children's moral education. However, he makes clear that if children's moral development is to be

influenced by literature and stories then it must not be left to chance. Tappan explains that children's moral development can only occur "in the context of an ongoing set of social interactions, mediated by narrative, as parents, teachers, other adults and even more competent peers assist children in moving through the ZPD" (p. 152). Currently, there is little empirical evidence to support the success of this approach. Hence, further research is an inviting prospect.

Teachers, Stories and Other Literature

The suggestion that the success of the use of stories and novels in moral education is dependent on the nature and skills of the teacher permeates the literature reviewed. Firstly, as implied by Narvaez et al (1999), teachers must be skilled in their selection of appropriate stories and novels. Teachers are offered some assistance with their selection, e.g., see Koc and Buzzelli (2004). However, Clare et al (1996) state that teachers must be also able to select texts that are "compatible with their (the pupils) stage of moral reasoning" (p. 338). A further implications of this requirement is that teachers must be aware of which moral stage each of their pupils are functioning at, and they must realise that the pupils' moral stages are "continually developing" (Koc and Buzzelli, 2004, p. 94). Several other important implications are identified by Clare et al (1996) in the following:

> … teachers must be versed in the stages of moral development posited by Kohlberg's model, must learn to recognise what issues are most likely to spark age-appropriate moral dissonance in their students, and must learn to advocate for a position beyond the

> students' current stage or level of thinking, i.e., must know how to create zones of proximal development for their students. This requires considerable teacher preparation, an investment of time and effort that many teachers may find difficult to sustain (p. 338).

These requirements imply that it would be inappropriate for a prescribed curriculum, such as The Heartwood Curriculum (Heartwood Institute, 2004), to be provided for teachers. Rather the curriculum would have to be responsive to the needs of the pupils and hence, very adaptable. Teachers are required to be able to make skilled decisions about how best to adapt it. It can be argued that for the use of stories in moral education to be embraced teacher education should endeavour to equip teachers with the particular skills that they require. For example, training teachers might be supported in implementing and evaluating a story based approach to moral education as an element of their school experience placements.

Furthermore, Jenkins (1997) argues that for pupils to extract and be influenced by the moral content of stories then they must adopt an "aesthetic response" (p. 75). Jenkins (1997) explains that "an aesthetic stance results in the evocation of private meaning, replete with personal thought and feelings" (p. 74). In other words, the reader relates what has been heard or read to his/her own life and personal dilemmas. Zbikowski and Collins (1994) agree that pupils must be able to make connections between what they read and "their own personal life experiences" (p. 19). They claim that it is the teacher's responsibility to foster a climate where these types of connections and responses can be made. Lamme (1996, p. 418) also asserts that "children need opportunities to discuss books in a

safe environment where their ideas and opinions are listened to and valued". This implies that a positive teacher-pupil relationship based on trust is required. Furthermore, the teacher's willingness to engage in such dialogue is essential to the success of the approach. Hence, not only particular skills but a particular nature seems necessary.

Jenkins (1997) goes on to make further claims about the type of teacher, and in fact the type of person, who is needed for this approach to work. She implies that for teachers to encourage their students to adopt an aesthetic stance then they themselves must be avid readers, who have a passion for literature. In addition, Jenkins (1997) sets high standards for teachers' own moral behaviour and expectations of their character when she states that "surrounding students with moral literature assumes that we have surrounded them with moral human beings" (p. 78). Hence, if teachers are to engage in discussion with pupils about moral issues, or in fact if they are to morally educate pupils at all, then they too must be "striving for moral excellence" (*ibid*.). However, as argued in Chapter 3, any type of moral education and, in fact, the role of the teacher itself should demand such attributes. As Chapter 1 discusses the requirement of such attributes implies that a careful induction of individuals into the teaching profession is required.

The chapter now considers the role that TV and film might play in moral education and suggests similar benefits to those of using stories.

TV and Films

It would be difficult to deny that TV and film have become an important part of most people's lives, including children's. This assumption is backed by Marsh et al, (2005, p. 17) who found in their study of "young children's (aged from birth to six) use of popular culture, media and new technologies in the home" based in England that "the ownership of televisions and video/DVD players was almost universal, with only 2% of homes not having access to these technologies". What's more, the researchers found that 29% of children aged 0-6 owned a television in their own bedroom (p. 19). Concerning statistics gathered from a number of sources and provided by Sigman ( 2005) suggest that not only do children have more access to TV than ever before but that they also spend more time watching it than has previously been the case:

> Children now spend more time watching a television screen than they spend in school. At this very moment, the average six year old child will have already watched for nearly one full year of their lives… Children aged 11 to 15 now spend an average of 53 hours a week - seven and a half hours a day – watching televisions and computers, an increase of 40 percent in a decade. In fact, most of our children now literally have more eye contact with television characters than with their own parents (p. 2).

With television playing such a major part in children's lives the question must be raised about what impact it has on children's development?

Negative Impacts of TV and Film

Postman (1994) argues that since TV is predominantly concerned with watching it requires no skills and that for this reason "everything is for everybody" (p. 79). He differentiates this from the skills needed to read and asserts that while children might have previously been protected from adult content in books by their inability to read what was written, in terms of TV, children are increasingly and blatantly exposed to adult content through programmes such as soap operas and the news. Postman does not insist that children should be protected from all forms of immorality, evil or wrong doing. However, he does descriptively compare and warn against the difference in how children might have previously encountered these concepts in fairytales and how they probably will encounter them now through television. He writes:

> … the importance of fairy tales lies in their capacity to reveal the existence of evil in a form that permits children to integrate it without trauma. This is possible not only because the content of fairy tales has grown organically over centuries and is under the control of adults (who may, for example, modify the violence or the ending to suit the needs of a particular child) but also because the psychological context in which the tales are told is usually reassuring and is, therefore, therapeutic. But the violence that is now revealed over television is not mediated by a mother's voice, is not much modified to suit the child, is not governed by any theory of child development. It is there because television requires material that comes in inexhaustible variety. It is also there because television directs everything to everyone at the same time, which is

> to say, television cannot keep secrets of any kind. This results in the impossibility of protecting children from the fullest and harshest disclosure of unrelenting violence. And here we must keep in mind that the stylized murders, rapes and plunderings that are depicted on weekly fictional programs are much less than half the problem. They are after all, clearly marked as fiction or pseudo-fairy tales, and we may assume (although not safely) that some children do not take them to be representations of adult life. Far more impressive are the daily examples of violence and moral degeneracy that are the staple of TV news shows. These are not mitigated by the presence of recognizable and attractive actors and actresses. They are put forward as the stuff of everyday life. These are real murders, real rapes, real plunderings. And the fact that they *are* the stuff of real life makes them all the more powerful (p. 93-94).

Much attention has been given to the idea that TV (and more specifically the content of TV programmes and films) can have a negative effect on children's behaviour, e.g., increased violence and aggression or behaviours based on fear and anxiety (for examples see Palmer, 2006; Adams and Moyles, 2005; Cantor, 2000; Black and Newman, 1995). Findings relating to the negative impact of TV and film might suggest attempts should be made to prevent or dissuade children from watching TV rather than promoting it as a means of moral education. Yet, it can be argued that TV can also have powerful positive influences on children and that there is a case for emphasis to be placed on ensuring that children make sense of what they have seen on TV, rather than being left to reason about it on their own. In fact, Carroll (2003) argues that it is neither the medium of TV nor

what it presents that is a moral problem but rather "our systematic failure to educate people about how to use it may be socially irresponsible" (p. 126).

Positive Impacts of TV and Film

Some research has been carried out to suggest that TV and film can have a positive impact on children's pro-social behaviours. Examples of such behaviours that were enhanced by children's television watching include:

- a greater willingness to resist temptation (Wolf and Cheyne, 1972)
- increased generosity (Bryan, 1971; Bryan and Walbeck, 1970; Rushton and Owen, 1975).

According to Gunter (1984) these studies show that children's values can be modified (in the short term at least) by watching television programmes. A limitation of these studies, as with other examples of this type of research, is that they were carried out in laboratory conditions using researcher generated materials. Since the materials were generated by the researchers they focused solely and specifically on a target value/behaviour. Gunter (1984) also explains that the situations shown in the researcher generated TV programmes were immediately emulated for children to experience after they had watched the programmes. This implies that the children were able to immediately apply what they had just watched and act upon the messages that had been communicated. It seems unlikely that children would be presented with a similar opportunity in 'real life'.

Other research has focused on the effects of educational TV programmes. Like the researcher generated materials in the previous studies, often educational TV programmes focus on a particular value/attribute and have a clear moral message for children to absorb. One educational TV programme that has received a great deal of interest is '*Sesame Street*'. Gunter (1984, p. 154) states that "this programme was aimed primarily at teaching a variety of basic intellectual and social skills to disadvantaged children living in urban ghettos". Yet, Fisch (2004) implies that its impact has been much farther reaching:

> More than 30 years after its premiere, no educational television series has had a greater impact – either on the research literature, the production of educational television, or on children – than *Sesame Street*… More than 1000 studies have examined *Sesame Street* and its power in areas such as literacy, number skills, and promoting pro-social behaviour… (p. 15).

As with the research conducted under laboratory conditions, several studies have shown that after watching episodes of *Sesame Street* and being placed in similar situations to those viewed children showed an increase in pro-social behaviours, such as in their willingness to co-operate and play together (Paulson, 1974; Zielinska and Chambers, 1995).

While there is some evidence to suggest that TV can have a positive impact on children, to date the research conducted has mainly focused on measuring observable behaviours rather than studying changes in children's moral reasoning skills as a result of television watching. This means that although

children might be seen to emulate positive (and seemingly moral) behaviours there is little evidence that the children have a clear understanding of why they are doing this or whether they would be able to select the same behaviour in a different situation. Furthermore, there has been little research conducted on the effects of ordinary television. This suggests that there is much scope for further research to be conducted in this field, particularly in terms of the impact of children's TV watching at home.

Another area for further investigation might be the impact of children's favourite TV characters. Some tentative studies have already been conducted in this area. Whereas the previous studies focused on children's observable behaviours, the studies relating to children's identification with TV characters focus predominantly on the changes that occur in a child's thinking and/or feelings. Rosenkoetter (in Singer and Singer, 2001) explains children's association with their favourite TV characters:

> To be sure, the immediate social reality of children is their home, friends and school. However, beyond this, their favourite television programs become an integral part of their daily life. When children regularly watch a program, they may begin to interact and respond to the program's characters as though they were real people in their immediate environment. This leads the child to an illusion of intimacy in which he or she may exchange identities with a television character or even adopt a role complementary to the television character (p. 468).

This description of children's interaction with characters on TV and in films can be likened to Zbikowski and Collin's (1994) discussion of the "moral laboratory", in which, readers conduct "thought experiments" (p. 10) to consider why characters behave the way they do and what impact and consequences their actions have. In addition, Rosenkoetter's suggestion that children come to swap identities with the TV characters that they watch links with Bettelheim's (1976) idea that fairy tales offer an individual the chance to contemplate "what the story seems to imply about him and his inner conflicts at this moment in his life" (p. 25).

Studies conducted by Noble (1983), Meyer (1973) and Donohue (1975) suggest a correlation between children's behaviour and the behaviour of their favourite TV characters. In the studies conducted by Meyer (1973) and Donohue (1975) children were asked to respond to hypothetical stories/situations by saying how they would react. The children were also asked to explain how they thought others would react (or expect them to react) in the same situation, this included their favourite TV character, their best friend and their parents. Both researchers reported significant associations between the children's explanations of how they would react and of how they thought their favourite TV character would react. In the studies, the findings relating to these associations were neither affected by gender or race. Rosenkoetter (in Singer and Singer, 2001) highlights that:

> Meyer was cautious to note that it is unclear whether the favourite television characters were influencing the younger viewers'

> judgements or the children were choosing television character who represent their views (p. 468).

Nonetheless, even if the children did choose their favourite TV characters based on the reason that they represented their own views it is clear that an association has been made. It might be argued that a child's choice of character could provide teachers with a means of gauging where that child is in terms of his/her moral development. Martin (2007) recommends that educators draw upon children's choice of favourite superheroes for a similar purpose. Similarly, 'characters' from real life, e.g., celebrities, sports personalities, etc… might also offer natural opportunities for discussion, particularly since their actions are so regularly (often negatively) reported on TV and in the press.

As discussed with the use of stories, strong identifications with TV characters could allow children to experience moral situations and consider how they might react without having to be placed in the actual moral situation. It can be suggested that this would better prepare the child for encountering similar moral situations in his/her 'real life'. Rosenkoetter (in Singer and Singer, 2001) also suggests that TV viewers' moral reasoning might advance as a result of identifying with the moral situations that TV characters face. He states that this is most likely if "the viewer's level of cognitive functioning is not able to resolve the issue" (that the TV character is experiencing) and the viewer begins "to experience cognitive conflict" (p. 464). Fisch (2004, p. 105) states that there is also evidence to suggest that "children not only acquire social behaviour from television, but consciously look to the medium as a source of social learning." Similarly, Coles (1986) found, during his work in the 1960s with a variety of

different children in America, that the children were able to use films to try to make sense of the difficulties that they were facing in their own lives. It is proposed that there is great potential for moral education and moral development if teachers harness and build upon children's association with TV characters and the themes and issues that they experience. Again, there appears to be promising opportunities for further research in this field, particularly in terms of classroom based studies.

Literature that evaluates the moral content and worth of children's films is also available (Wonderly, 2009; Morris, 2000; Ward, 1996; Bell et al, 1995). Most of this literature speculates about what moral lessons or messages children might get from particular films, e.g., The Lion King (Ward, 1996), Jumanji (Morris, 2000), but little research has been conducted to confirm the impact of film on children's moral development or to suggest effective approaches for making use of children's film in moral education. Carr (2006) argues that the benefits of using stories to teach moral education and to promote moral development extend to some films, as some are based on myths, legends and classical stories. However, he points out that not all films "are of equal moral weight and educational potential" (p. 329). Thus, he implies that a careful selection process is needed. As with the use of stories, this would signify that skill is needed on the teacher's part to select films of appropriate moral weight.

Most of the studies reviewed assume that children are capable of deciphering the messages from television programmes on their own with little or no input from anyone else. Wonderly (2009, p. 1) reminds one that it is not always the case that

children are considered capable of "moral deliberation". She offers examples of philosophers who have, historically, disregarded children as being capable of moral reasoning, e.g., Aristotle, Rousseau. This thesis does not wish to rely on either of the above assumptions. Instead it will be assumed that children are capable of moral deliberation but in order for them to morally benefit from the stories and messages that they watch on TV they must be assisted and guided (as advised by Clare et al. (1996) and Tappan (1998) with regards to the use of stories). It can be suggested that support is particularly important to help children decipher the often more subtle and complex messages communicated by the popular TV programmes that they watch, e.g., dramas, soap operas, news broadcasts, etc. As Wonderly (2009, p. 3) proffers, "pre-adolescents are already exploring life's moral terrains; they require only that we properly guide and equip them for a successful journey". Further discussion of how teachers and parents might assist children is now given.

## Stories, Television, Film and Culture

Chapter 2 discusses the influence of school and home in moral education and in the development of values. The chapter argues that it is important to find a way of dealing with conflict when it arises between the two domains. It is concluded that if school and home can both acknowledge that a crossing over of values is inevitable and (generally) desirable then the interaction between the two value domains can be successful. A reinterpretation of Rawls' theory of overlapping consensus provided by Halliday (1999) is introduced as a helpful way of understanding how schools might attempt to tackle the 'liberal democratic

problem' by engaging in discussion about disagreements and attempting to establish common ground within their community on each occasion. It is proposed that the development of moral reasoning skills for all involved is essential. The chapter suggests that the members of a school community share a 'common culture', which their morality is bound up in.

Even although Sigman (2005) asserts that TV destroys cultures and Putnam (2001) maintains that TV has contributed to a decline of social activity and sense of community in American society, this chapter argues that stories, TV and film are an important part of a community's 'common culture'. The next section of this chapter shows that stories, TV programmes and films present opportunities for teachers, parents and pupils to tackle moral education together. It is put forward that the use of stories, TV programmes and films might offer one possible solution to the 'liberal democratic problem' for moral education.

Examples of research which has determined that TV and film can create a common culture between home and school are provided by Marsh et al (2005) and Marsh and Thompson (2001). The former found that parents and early years' practitioners were on the whole positive about the impact of TV and film in children's lives and felt that they offered educational benefits. One benefit that was highlighted by parents was that the use of popular culture and media made them feel that "the daily lives and practices of their families are being valued and that their knowledge can make a contribution to a topic" (p. 72). Hence, through the use of TV and film parents are offered an avenue into their children's education, which they feel that they can offer something to. It could be argued

that this is a hopeful finding for targeting and encouraging parents who feel less confident about involving themselves in their children's education. For example, West et al (1998) found a direct correlation between mothers' educational level and their involvement in their children's education, with "more highly educated mothers" (p. 482) taking a more involved role. West et al (*ibid*.) concluded that one reason for these mothers being more involved in their children's education is because the mothers' "own cultural capital" puts them in a better position to do so. The concept of 'cultural capital' is further discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

Another study by Marsh and Thompson (2001) illuminates how and why the use of TV and film as a source of common culture might be successful. Their study, although focusing on literacy development, involved pre-school children and their families. Through the completion of literacy diaries, the study determined that popular culture, e.g., "music, sport, computers and related merchandise, books, magazines, television and film" (Marsh and Millard, 2000, p. 20), was becoming an increasingly important part of children's lives that parents felt that they could engage with their children about. As a result of these findings, the researchers invited the parents to work together in the early years setting to construct media boxes to be used at home with the children. Themes for the media boxes included children's interests from popular culture such as; *Teletubbies*, *Bob the Builder* and *Winnie the Pooh*. The researchers reported that when the parents came together to construct the boxes they too found a commonality through popular culture and engaged in many discussions about the themes and issues that had recently been presented in their own favourite TV

programmes. Marsh and Thompson (2001) explain that the discussions that parents had and the connections that they made could be described as a sharing of 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1977). Lareau (1987, p. 74) explains Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital as follows:

> Bourdieu (1977a, 1977b; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) argues that schools draw unevenly on the social and cultural resources of members of the society. For example, schools utilize particular linguistic structures, authority patterns, and types of curricula; children from higher social locations enter schools already familiar with these social arrangements. Bourdieu maintains that the cultural experiences in the home facilitate children's adjustment to school and academic achievement, thereby transforming cultural resources into what he calls cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977a, 1977b).

In other words, an individual's cultural capital is made up of the knowledge, experiences and identities that one brings from one's culture, mainly one's family or social class (Dumais, 2002). The need for school and home to find an acceptable common cultural ground is highlighted by the earlier point that, traditionally, children whose cultural capital is least similar to the qualities and methods of schooling are less likely to achieve academically. Bourdieu's theory might also explain why less educated mothers are less likely to feel that they can involve themselves in their children's education as shown by West et al (1998).

The final stages of Marsh and Thompson's study suggested that the use of media boxes might provide a common ground. At this stage, when parents made use of

the media boxes at home with their children, it was found that the media boxes created much conversation between parent and child and gave parents increased confidence in enhancing their children's learning. Marsh and Thompson (2001) speculated that this was because the media boxes stimulated connections in the cultural capital of the family. The researchers concluded that:

> It is time to firmly embed the popular cultural and media texts children encounter in home and community into schooled literacy practices if we are to move the disparate elements in children's worlds a little closer together (p. 277).

It is suggested that the same argument can be made in terms of bringing together home and school on moral education.

Implications for School and Home

Although the study conducted by Marsh and Thompson (2001) did not indicate that the conversations generated by the media boxes contributed to moral debate it is proposed that careful construction and use of similar age-appropriate media boxes or materials could support this aim. Research conducted by Coles (1986) indicates that children are able to converse about moral issues/themes in films as naturally as they are able to discuss real situations that have happened to them. For media boxes/materials to stimulate this type of discussion it would make sense for their construction to be informed by children's favourite books, TV programmes, films and/or characters, and by the children themselves. The materials chosen would, therefore, be suitable to a particular group/class of

children but not necessarily for every class or child within a school. This implies that each class would need to be responsible for selecting the materials that suit them best for the approach to be successful.

Marsh and Thompson's study highlights the importance and benefits of meaningfully involving parents also and any attempt to approach moral education by drawing upon a common culture provided by stories, TV and films would need to involve parents. The idea of the school as a "a partner with parents" (The Curriculum Review Group, 2004, p. 10) is clearly valued and urged in Scottish education by the Scottish Government (2008):

> The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of respect and trust based upon shared values across the school community, including parents… (p. 20).

One would argue from experience as a practising teacher that, particularly in terms of moral education, it is not only desirable but essential for schools and parents to attempt to work together for any type of moral or values education to be successful and effective. As Chapter 2 shows, parental influence is, on the whole, likely to be dominant.

Thus, it is important to consider how school and home might hope to work together for the proposed approach to moral education to be successful. Firstly, it is suggested that a dialogue between home and school is crucial. In this way, the purpose of using stories, TV and film to draw upon a common culture becomes two-fold:

1. as a means of encouraging home and school to work together to assist children in their moral development;
2. as a channel for school and home to communicate and interact on moral issues/values.

It is proposed that by approaching moral issues through the media of stories, TV and film, parents and educators might be able to discuss and reason about values and other moral matters in a less confrontational way. Using this approach it might be possible for school and home to establish "touchstones" (Halliday, 1999, p. 50) on moral matters and values. This is not to suppose that all value/moral conflicts between home and school will be solved by attending to moral issues or dilemmas experienced by characters in stories, TV or films. However, it might provide one way for home and school to start discussing moral issues at a deeper level. It seems unrealistic to assume that there will ever be a way of attending to/alleviating all moral conflicts between home and school. Rather it is proposed that by opening a channel between home and school for such discussions a foundation might be set for parents, teachers and pupils to begin with. As Noddings (2003, p. 184) asserts, "in order to engage in true dialogue with our students, we educators will first have to engage in true dialogue with their parents".

One way of opening a dialogue between school and home might be to invite parents to find out more about the proposed approach. By drawing upon interests from TV and film it might be possible to 're-brand' moral education into a form that is more appealing and, perhaps, less daunting to some parents. For

example, one suspects that some parents would be more interested in and more willing to attend a forum on '*Eastenders*' than a forum on moral education. Hence, parents who would otherwise not attend might become interested.

Another means of beginning a dialogue and involving parents might be to adopt the model used by Marsh and Thomson (2001), i.e., to invite parents to involve themselves in decision making about the materials to be used in school and at home. It might be hoped that, as with Marsh and Thomson's workshops, opportunities would be presented for the parents to engage in natural discussion about the approach and to share their cultural capital.

In terms of facilitating an ongoing dialogue between home and school, the use of journals or logs might be worthwhile. Stanley (2004) advocates this method in her approach to developing philosophical thinking with children. Stanley explains that in her approach the diary might contain questions or statements generated by the children and/or guided by the teacher that have developed from a class philosophy session. Stanley suggests that the diary should allow for children's responses and adults' responses, and should be used as a means of extending philosophical conversations beyond the classroom. Examples of completed diary entries are provided by Stanley (2004, p. 89 – 92). Stanley states that upon the diary's return to school, discussion of the themes/issues can continue within the class. She maintains that in this way the diary can become "a valuable tool for opening up communication with home" (p. 94). It is suggested that completion of the diary allows parents' ideas to be contributed to the class community and offers schools an opportunity to learn more about parents'

views and their understanding of moral themes/values. With the established use of diaries it might also be possible that the diaries could adopt a reciprocal quality, i.e., they might be used in a way that allows the school's understanding of moral themes/values to be shared also.

To provide schools and their communities with a focus in using the proposed approach they might decide upon certain values/moral issues to target for a period of time. In line with this, the chosen stories, news items, TV programmes or films could encourage exploration of the target values/moral issues but should also allow for naturally occurring discussion of other values. An important feature of selecting materials and of targeting specific values/moral issues is be to ensure that no attempt is made to 'preach' about how the values should be interpreted. Instead, the stimulus provided should allow pupils, parents and teachers to explore values/moral issues in ways that are meaningful to them individually and collectively. It is intended that the approach respects the development of private morality (or, as Chapter 2 discusses, the development of personal or family values) but also supports the development of public morality (core values/the 'common good'). To refer back to the theory of 'conscious social reproduction' put forward by Gutmann (1993, p. 3-4) it is suggested that the proposed approach to moral education might offer an opportunity for the members of a school's community to collectively reproduce the common good. However, Halliday (1999) reminds us that any conception of the common good reached amongst members of the school community is not necessarily permanent. It might be helpful to consider exchanges on values/moral matters between home and school as "merely shifting sands of

agreements to which appeal can be made on a transitory basis" (Halliday, 1999, p. 49). This basis calls for values/moral matters to be revisited and continually explored, requiring school and home to have a willingness to do so.

The chapter now considers how else schools might implement and support the proposed approach to moral education. The use of a philosophical approach has already been mentioned in this section. It is suggested that schools might adopt a philosophical approach with children in using stories, TV and film as a vehicle for moral education. Stanley (2004) supports the idea that popular culture provides appropriate stimulus for children's philosophical discussions. She goes as far to suggest that TV affords children the "role of expert" since "the majority of young children have television as their specialist subject" (p. 32). There is little doubt that the use of a philosophical approach with children can assist in developing their thinking, listening, questioning and discussion skills. However, many writers also advocate that a philosophical approach can advance children's judgement and reasoning skills (Matthews, 1980; Pritchard, 1996; Fisher, 2003; Lipman, 2003; Cassidy, 2006). Similarly, the 'instructional conversation' method as developed by Clare et al (1996) and outlined above seems to offer an effective approach for engaging children in moral discussion, in order to support the development of their moral reasoning skills and overall moral development.

It is suggested that a philosophical or 'instructional conversation' approach be used when first introducing and initially discussing stories, TV programmes and films in class. It is proposed that, in doing so, the following benefits are offered:

- Teachers can model and facilitate the type of moral discussion that will help pupils to further their understanding of moral issues,
- Children's reasoning skills can be exercised and measured,
- Children can be exposed to a range of views as expressed by different children within their class,
- A stimulus is introduced and developed for further discussion at home.

Chapter 1 argues that teachers should have a philosophical basis for their teaching of moral education. It is suggested that the proposed approach can support different moral philosophies, including those outlined in Chapter 1. For Kant, the approach would allow pupils to begin to develop and exercise personal moral maxims, which could later be consulted in moral situations. What's more, in considering characters' actions in moral situations pupils might be able to test moral actions based on Kant's categorical imperatives (1976), e.g., by attending to questions such as, *What if everyone did this?* H*ow does this action treat others?* Similarly, in terms of Consequentialist theory, pupils would be able to consider the consequences of different moral actions and how the actions are likely to impact upon themselves and individuals on a wider scale. By examining the actions available to characters in stories, TV programmes and films, pupils could be introduced to the idea that individuals have freedom to choose how best to live but that there are limits on this freedom, as introduced by Mill (1998). Furthermore, it is suggested that a form of "moral apprenticeship" (Brown, 2000, p. 417) can be entered into by encouraging pupils to observe the virtuous activity of characters in stories, TV programmes and films and through contemplation of

their actions. In line with Aristotelianism, the proposed approach could offer opportunities for pupils to develop *phronesis* (Frankena, 1968, p. 55), and for those who are incapable of doing so the approach could provide examples of moral behaviours to copy.

In addition to supporting the teaching of moral education at school, it is proposed that engaging pupils in philosophical inquiry of moral issues will also benefit the use of the approach at home. One possible benefit of engaging in philosophical discussions at school is that pupils will be better equipped to engage with others at home in similar conversations when revisiting the diary and stimulus materials brought from school. It might be that the children would be able to talk about the discussion that had gone before as a starting point at home, alongside the diary or stimulus materials. Early work into this approach by the author of this thesis suggests that if children are stimulated and engaged by a story, TV programme, film or news item and by the philosophical discussion that goes with it then they will naturally wish to talk about the matter and engage in further discussion at home.

Noddings (1994, p. 114) agrees that conversations between children and adults are at "the very heart of moral education" but she asserts that of particular importance is the "quality of ordinary conversation". It follows that children should be supported in developing the quality of their conversations and the proposed use of philosophical inquiry or 'instructional conversations' would ideally support this. However, Noddings (*ibid*.) warns that it is the quality of adult conversations that can sometimes create difficulties, e.g., if adults are unprepared to take what children say seriously or if they regard what children

say as "cute" then moral conversations will not progress, no matter how prepared the child is to engage in them. An implication is that parents need to be aware of this potential difficulty and of their expected role in order for moral discussion to progress at home. The opportunity for parents to observe children's philosophical discussions might offer a means of demonstrating appropriate moral conversation might look, sound and feel like. Of course, teachers firstly need to establish an appropriate quality of moral conversation with children before demonstrations can be possible. It is not expected that establishing such conversations would be either quick or easy. Nonetheless, Stanley (2004) has found that it is the very challenge and difficulty of a philosophical approach that can enthuse and interest children.

Just as it has been assumed that children and their parents will require preparation and support in using the proposed approach, one also assumes that teachers will require guidance. Wringe (1998) makes clear the importance of the teacher's role in moral discussions and highlights potential problems that can occur when teachers are not properly equipped to handle them:

> The managing of such discussion is a skilled business not easily accomplished by the ordinary class teacher whose specialisms lie in other directions. When not well handled, sessions may also be open to the criticisms of promoting permissiveness on the one hand or of simply providing the teacher with an opportunity to indoctrinate her own views on the other, if not both simultaneously (p. 278).

Moral discussions that validate either of the criticisms outlined by Wringe go against the aims of the proposed approach to moral education. The importance of the role of the teacher in introducing and facilitating worthwhile moral conversations of an acceptable quality implies that support and training for teachers is essential. It is suggested that any teachers involved in the approach need to be willing to engage in continuing professional development (CPD) in the area. Possible formats for this being engagement with other staff, completion of professional reading and consultancy with outside agencies, including possible attendance at training events. As sometimes is the case in schools, it might be that some teachers initially trial the approach with others phasing in as the success of the approach is verified.

This leads to a final consideration about how the success of the proposed approach might be measured. Fisher (2003, p. 83) states that "there are problems in trying to evaluate the development of any moral culture". Yet, for the approach to be considered worthwhile an attempt must be made to measure its success. To begin to offer suggestions it is worth revisiting the initial aims of the approach. The proposed approach has been offered as one possible way for schools to tackle the liberal democratic problem. In Chapter 2, the liberal democratic problem is discussed in terms of values. The main problem for schools is one of enculturating desirable moral values in a society that does not always demonstrate those values and even does not always agree on what constitutes desirability. Thus, schools need a way of tackling what is desirable, in terms of moral education and values.

Hence, the first measure of success would seem to be how effective the approach has been in providing a forum for school and home to tackle moral education together. An evaluation of whether drawing upon the common culture provided through stories, TV and film has helped school and home to tackle deeper moral issues would also be appropriate. Stanley (2004) evaluates the success of the home-school link in her use of a philosophical approach by gathering feedback from those involved, e.g., teachers, parents and pupils. A similar type of evaluation might be suitable for measuring the success of the proposed approach, particularly if the feedback offered the opportunity for next steps and recommendations. It is also surmised that evaluation of this aspect of the approach would be ongoing since evidence of success (or otherwise) would likely be collected from the dialogue and interactions between those involved, e.g., during moral discussions, through diary entries and in continuing dialogue with parents.

Ultimately, the aim of the approach, as with all moral education, is to help pupils to develop as moral beings. Fisher (2003, p. 83 – 84) states that "moral development means enabling children to develop a set of values that are both personal, relating to self interest, and public, relating to the interests of others". Chapter 1 argues, through study of the philosophies of Aristotle, Kant and Mill, that it is not enough just to think about how to be moral or to consider how one *might* live a moral life but that this must be realised in practice. All of this implies that another important measure of success for this approach is whether it helps pupils to develop morally, both in their thinking and in their actions. Again, it is not assumed that the measure of this success would be easy. In the hope that the

proposed approach could be realistically implemented by schools it is not suggested that teachers would monitor and evaluate the moral development of *each* child at *all* times. Instead, Fisher's advice (2003, p. 90) on evaluating the "growth" of the community of which the children are a part, most likely beginning with the class community, might offer a more manageable solution. It is suggested that in evaluating moral development schools would continually refer to what their communities acknowledge as necessary and desirable in moral terms. Again opportunities for measuring growth within this community might be provided through the moral conversations that the pupils engage in, the diary entries that they provide, observations and experiences shared by parents and the pupils' actions within the school community in general. The approach could also be extended by teachers in working with individual pupils as and when this was necessary, e.g., in helping a pupil to reflect on and reason about a particular action or choice. The use of the approach in this way might allow for teachers to monitor the moral development of individual children who require particular focus. It is also recommended that pupils and their parents should be involved in evaluating the growth that occurs through the community that they create together by engaging in moral conversations and through their involvement in the proposed approach. However fraught with difficulties measurement might be it is argued that schools should not be put off trying something new.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter offers one possible practical approach to tackling moral education in Scottish primary schools. It would be easy, although naïve and unhelpful, to think that this approach alone could resolve the liberal democratic problem for schools. This thesis maintains that moral education should be considered a feature of both the formal curriculum and of all that a school does. Hence, the approaches that a school adopts must reflect this. The proposed approach, while offering opportunities to tackle moral issues as part of the formal curriculum and helping to create a channel for tackling issues as they arise, cannot be relied upon for dealing with all moral matters or value conflicts. For example, when moral issues or value conflicts of a more serious and urgent nature arise it would be inappropriate (as well as unappreciated by those involved) to refer to what a character in a story, TV programme or film might do in the same situation. Furthermore, as Chapters 3 and 4 discuss there are many values to be explored and encouraged through the ways in which teachers approach other areas of the curriculum and in how they induct pupils into various practices, e.g., by encouraging pupils to foster an appreciation for the beauty of others' artwork and to take pride in their own creations.

MacIntyre (in MacIntyre and Dunne, 2002) explains:

> …teachers enable their students to deploy their skills in order to achieve the goods of some particular practice of mathematical or scientific enquiry, of reading imaginative literature and responding to it as part of a community of readers, of historical enquiry. And

> part of what such students need to learn is to value, for example, the activities and outcomes of scientific enquiry… What I have said implies that teaching itself is not a practice, but a set of skills and habits put to the service of a variety of practices. The teacher should think of her or himself as a mathematician, a reader of poetry, an historian or whatever, engaged in communicating craft and knowledge to apprentices (p. 5).

Hence, teachers and schools require a consideration and exploration of all moral avenues and the roles that they play within them.

This thesis asserts that teachers and schools require a philosophical understanding of the moral education that they teach and promote. With this in mind, the proposed approach to moral education is suggested as a means for schools to take moral education forward but it is advised that schools firstly consider their philosophical stance. As explained, the liberal democratic problem for schools is one of enculturating desirable moral values in a society that does not always demonstrate those values and even does not always agree on what constitutes desirability. Carr (2003) suggests that it is unlikely that any school could function without assimilating some basic values. Hence, it is suggested that a starting point for schools is to determine what on a basic level is desirable and necessary for them.

Of course an acknowledgement of what others find desirable and a willingness to remain flexible is important too. The proposed approach suggests one way that school and home might attempt to work together to morally educate pupils

and to determine what is acceptable in moral terms. However, one must again emphasise the need for those involved to have an understanding and appreciation of liberal democracy and what this means for moral education. Otherwise, the importance of finding a way for school and home to tackle moral education together might fail to be realized. So far this thesis has found insufficient evidence, through its analysis and review of policy, research and literature, to suggest that an appropriate understanding and appreciation of liberal democracy and its implications for moral education is prevalent within Scottish education. Further research is necessary to confirm. However, if this is the case it must be concluded that for the proposed approach to moral education, or any other approach, to hope to be successful reflection and change at a deeper educational level are required first. Deuchar and Maitles (in Bryce and Hume, 2008) recommend that similar reflection is needed for 'Education for Citizenship' to be successfully embedded within Scottish Education. They imply that there is potential to learn much more by reflecting in this way:

> Education for Citizenship throws up central questions as to what sort of education we want. That is why the continuing high profile of debate around the subject is so important and valuable. We could come out of it with not just a better understanding of citizenship but also a better feel for the nature of education as a whole (p. 292).

It is proposed that reflection and debate about moral education now needs to take place in Scottish education. As suggested above, a re-evaluation of moral education might lead to a re-evaluation of education as whole. By considering what education should mean for Scotland and its citizens and what it should aim

to achieve, it can be hoped that moral education will be given more attention and that the features of liberal democracy will be more highly valued and reflected in Scotland's education agendas.

# Chapter Six – Concluding Remarks

This final chapter concludes the thesis. The chapter discusses implications that have arisen from the findings of this review and makes recommendations for moral education within Scottish primary education.

This thesis explores moral education from practical, theoretical and political perspectives. It shows that moral education is a complex area in terms of study and practice. From the outline of three philosophical approaches to moral education in Chapter 1 it is concluded that education as a whole is best conceived as a moral endeavour. The thesis cautions that moral education must not merely become something to be done. It is suggested that teachers must be sure of the purpose and aims of moral education. Hence, a philosophical basis for their teaching of moral education and their moral interactions with pupils is important.

A common theme throughout the thesis is the need to support teachers. This is unsurprising since the thesis shows that the moral role of the teacher can be an extremely complex and uncertain one. It is suggested that teachers require particular skills to effectively teach moral education and it is argued that some individuals are naturally more suited to the role of moral educator. This thesis recommends that teacher education should more effectively prepare teachers for their role as moral educators. Firstly, a more rigorous selection process for candidates is suggested. For example, candidates should be chosen not only based on their relevant academic achievements and experience but based also on demonstration of their moral character. As was the case at the beginning of

formal education in Scotland, it can be asserted that teachers should begin with an interest in and concern for the moral purpose of education.

Christie (in Bryce and Hume, 2008) explains that a main aim of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Scotland is:

> … to provide students with relevant theoretical perspectives and opportunities to question practice, to develop their own personal theories and to articulate their value positions with respect to education (p. 830).

Certainly there are many different educational theories for new teachers to familiarise themselves with. What's more, teacher education is subject to pressures from political and educational agendas in the same way as schools are (Gillies in Bryce and Hume, 2008). It is understandable that initial teacher education cannot be expected to prepare teachers for every possible facet of their professional role and it is acceptable that much is learned upon entering the profession. However, this thesis argues that teacher education requires a more serious consideration of the philosophies of liberalism and ethics than it currently offers. It is suggested that only through careful consideration can new teachers begin to understand the nature of the liberal democratic problem for schools and the depth of their moral role. This thesis argues that without this understanding teachers cannot be expected, in terms of moral education, to be sure of what they are doing or why they are doing it. It is proposed during their initial teacher education new teachers should be exposed to a range of philosophical approaches to moral education and that opportunities should be

given for new teachers to reflect upon their own philosophical stance. The importance of such reflection cannot be overestimated since the findings of this thesis suggest that teachers can be faced with moral situations from the moment they enter the school domain. There is also evidence to suggest that teachers do not always feel that their moral role is made explicit or that they always feel supported as moral educators. For these reasons, it is argued that teachers must begin to develop their own sense of what it is to be moral and of how this might be nurtured before they enter the profession.

Another recommendation for teacher education is that it should offer opportunities for teachers to engage in the types of activities and practices that foster moral development. For example, new teachers might be encouraged to regularly engage in moral discussion, in order to develop their own moral discussion skills and to enhance their understanding of moral reasoning. It is suggested that new teachers should encounter a variety of approaches to moral education, including the proposed use of stories, TV programmes and films as a possible medium. There are several reasons for these recommendations. Firstly, it is anticipated that by experiencing a variety of approaches to moral education, teachers will develop confidence to implement different approaches within their own practice. Secondly, it is proposed that by further developing their moral discussion and reasoning skills, teachers will be better prepared for engaging with pupils, colleagues, parents and others when value conflicts arise. As is recommended for schools, it is suggested that teacher education should aim to emphasise values in all that it teaches and endeavour to tackle moral issues within the situations that they arise. In essence, it is proposed that the moral

dimension should permeate all areas of teacher education, just as it is proposed that it should permeate all areas of primary education.

The thesis situates moral education within Scottish primary education. A review of key policy documents in Chapter 4 shows that an emphasis on moral education as a formal area of the Scottish curriculum has detracted focus from it. While Chapter 3 concludes that an overemphasis on effectiveness by governments can force schools and teachers to prioritise similarly. A review of the priorities recently put forward by the Scottish government in '*Curriculum for Excellence*' has shown that moral education as a feature of the everyday life of a school, although mentioned, is overshadowed. This is not to say that Scottish schools do not involve themselves in moral education everyday. Rather, this thesis argues that moral education permeates everything that goes on within a school community. Hence, schools and teachers cannot help but transmit moral values. The worry is that if the government takes little notice of this type of moral education then little notice might also be taken by schools and teachers. Hence, it is possible that moral values might continue to be communicated to pupils, perhaps, unknowingly and unintentionally. This thesis concludes that more must be done in Scottish education to raise the status of moral education and of what schools do as moral educators. One way that this might be achieved is through educational policy.

A recommendation for policy makers is that they focus less emphasis on moral education as a particular feature of religious education, and place more emphasis on moral education as a feature of all education, including all

curricular areas. Chapter 4 explains that there are many curricular areas, like religious education, that remain incomplete without an appreciation of the moral aspects. It follows that moral issues should be throughout the curriculum. As with teacher education, it is suggested that curricular policy should also advocate a range of approaches to moral education, including those that encourage moral discussion and require moral reasoning. One approach is detailed and advocated by this thesis as a possible practical solution for schools. The review of literature in Chapter 5 shows that there are many potential benefits of using stories, TV programmes and films to explore moral issues. It is proposed that curricular policy should highlight the potential benefits to teachers and, in particular, encourage teachers to appreciate how the approach might be used to ease the liberal democratic problem. This thesis recognises that other approaches are necessary too and suggests that teachers must also be made aware of this. Otherwise many teachers might view the proposed approach to moral education as just another initiative or a box to be ticked. As MacIntyre (1985), along with others, argues doing something well is another form of moral education. It can be suggested that this applies to what teachers and their pupils do. Ultimately, policy makers must do more to acknowledge that teachers make choices about moral education in everything that they do and how they do it. One way to acknowledge and encourage this role is for policy makers to ensure that the education agendas that they promote allow teachers to explore a range of values with their pupils through their teaching and the ways that they teach. Chapter 3 reveals that some teachers avoid dealing with moral issues or engaging in moral discussions due to time pressures and a feeling that they need to 'get through' the curriculum. This

thesis suggests that teachers would be more likely to explore the values in what they teach and engage in discussion about moral issues as they arise if they felt that they were supported and justified in doing so. It is proposed that this is something for policy makers and managers to consider.

This thesis argues that, particularly in recent times, policy makers have missed some fundamental concerns regarding moral education. As discussed, one of these concerns is the moral purpose of education as a whole. Another concern is the impact of liberal democracy and how schools might begin to tackle the challenges that it presents for moral education. The principles of liberal democracy, the impact of the diversity of values within our society and the distinction between public and private highlight a need for greater partnerships between members of school communities. Regardless of how challenging it might be for school communities to agree on moral matters and values it is concluded that attempts must be made to tackle the conflicts that arise. Arguably policy makers must acknowledge and outline these concerns and the challenges that they bring. A further recommendation is for policy makers to encourage schools to reflect upon how highly they value the moral purpose of education and the impact of the diverse values and moral perspectives within their school community. It is suggested that schools can only hope to move forward, in terms of moral education, by starting from this point. A significant transformation seems to be required. It is the intention of this thesis to highlight precisely that. One wonders how a moral education of the young might hope to save society from some of the very problems that its elders have created?

The use of stories, TV programmes and films is offered by this thesis as one possible approach to moral education. It is argued that the proposed approach encourages everyone to tackle moral education together by helping to establish common ground for settling smaller moral issues. Presently, little work has been completed in this area. Further research is required to determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the approach. The approach seems to offer much promise for classroom based studies to be conducted across the primary school stage. However, based on the recommendations set out in this chapter it is expected that research in this area will present many challenges. The findings of this thesis suggest that for any type of research in this area to be worthwhile the research will need to extend beyond the classroom, and move into the school and its wider community. For this reason, future researchers should consider what preparatory work will need to be completed in schools before the approach can be trialled.

It can be suggested that this preparatory work holds the key to worthwhile changes in moral education, which the proposed approach along with others might build upon. It is proposed that an initial consideration for researchers should be the importance of emphasising that the research is based on the premise that education is primarily a moral endeavour and that moral education is not simply a feature of the formal curriculum. For participating schools this will probably require a commitment not just to a change in their moral education curriculum but a change to the school's entire approach to moral education and the ethos surrounding it. Also, as emphasized throughout the thesis an awareness and appreciation of liberal democracy and what it means

for Scottish society and its citizens is required. Hence, it will be necessary for researchers to gauge current understanding and to find ways to build upon this. It will also be important for participating schools to reflect upon what, in moral terms, is desirable and necessary for them before implementation of any approach begins. It is speculated that all of this might require deep and sustained reflection that seems to have become less and less the norm in recent years.

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