

Character Nation: how can Britain become a world leader in character education?

Event Details

Date	Monday 5 October 2015
Time	0815 - 0945
Venue	Stanley Livingstone room, Radisson Blu Edwardian, Free Trade Hall, Peter Street, Manchester M2 5GP <i>Please note this venue is outside the secure zone</i>
Format	Panel (theatre format)

Running Order

- 08.15** Guests and speakers arrive (refreshments available)
 - 08.20** Welcome and introduction from the Chair
 - 08.25** Lord Holmes
 - 08.35** Lucy Frazer MP
 - 08.45** Nicky Morgan to arrive
Professor James Arthur, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham
 - 08.50** Ralph Scott, Demos
 - 08.55** Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP
 - 09.05** Q&A discussion chaired by Lord James O'Shaughnessy, Floreat Education
 - 09.40** Closing remarks
 - 09.45** End
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Contact

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About the event

The event will discuss the importance of developing 'character', understood as the capabilities and virtues that enable young people to succeed and flourish, and what role the education system can play in helping young people to develop them.

Recent evidence has shown both the importance for later life outcomes and the educability of these character virtues. However, many teachers feel they are not given the time or training they need in order to adequately assist young people in developing them.

The discussion will draw on the conclusions of a new Demos report *Character Nation*, produced in partnership with the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, which suggested that Ofsted should place a greater emphasis on character in assessing schools, including reviewing the developmental activities of students outside school and in the wider community (as in Scotland). It also advocated the adoption of a school ethos through a 'school community' annual general meeting and that initial teacher training (ITT) cover the delivery of character development and moral reflection.

Key questions will include:

- How should we understand 'character'? Why does it matter?
- What works best to develop it – both in school and outside?
- Can or should character be assessed or measured?
- What are the policy priorities for Government in order to make a character-building education system a reality?

Speaker Biographies

Rt Hon. Nicky Morgan MP, Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities
Nicky Morgan, was elected as the Conservative MP for Loughborough in 2010.

Nicky studied law at Oxford University. She worked as a solicitor specialising in Corporate Law advising a range of private and public companies from 1994 till her election in 2010.

In July 2014 Nicky was appointed by the Prime Minister to become Secretary of State for Education. She is also Minister for Women and Equalities. Nicky previously served as Financial Secretary to the Treasury (2014), Minister for Women (2014), Economic Secretary to the Treasury (2013 - 14), an Assistant Government Whip (2012 - 13) and the Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to the Rt Hon. David Willetts MP, Cabinet Minister for Universities and Science (2010 - 12). In summer 2010, she was elected by her fellow MPs to serve on the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee, but gave up that position following her appointment as a PPS.

Lucy Frazer MP, Member for South East Cambridgeshire

Lucy was elected to be the Member of Parliament for South East Cambridgeshire in May 2015. She previously practised as a barrister and was appointed as Queen's Counsel in 2013.

She went to university in Cambridge where she was President of the Cambridge Union.

Speaker Biographies Continued

Lord Holmes of Richmond MBE

Chris Holmes is Britain's most successful Paralympic swimmer, winning a record 6 gold's at a single games. After retiring from competitive swimming Chris worked as a commercial lawyer until taking on the role of Director of Paralympic Integration for London 2012. Chris was appointed to the House of Lords in 2013 as the Lord Holmes of Richmond, where education, digital skills, technology, culture, media and sport are particular areas of interest. Chris also sits on the Social Mobility Select Committee in the House of Lords. Earlier this year Chris spoke at the Department for Education's Character Awards which rewarded outstanding examples of character education. Chris divides his time between parliamentary work, a role as non-executive at the Equality and Human Rights Commission and speaking, consultancy and charitable commitments.

Lord James O'Shaughnessy – Founder and Managing Director, Floreat Education

James is the Managing Director of Floreat Education. James is also chair of the International Positive Education Network, a global organisation that promotes the 'character + academics' approach to education.

James is a co-founder of EDSPACE, a shared workspace for education entrepreneurs and innovators, and Chief Policy Advisor at Portland Communications. He is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Values, a Visiting Fellow at Policy Exchange, an Advisor to Character Lab, and a governor at Lena Gardens primary school in Hammersmith.

James was Director of Policy and Research for Prime Minister David Cameron between 2007 and 2011, latterly in No.10 Downing Street. Prior to that he was deputy director at the leading think tank Policy Exchange, where he published and edited several reports on school reform. James holds an MA (Oxon) in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Oxford.

Ralph Scott, Head of the Citizenship and Political Participation programme, Demos

Ralph is Head of Citizenship at Demos, with research interests in character education, social mobility, integration and political representation. He is currently leading Demos' work on education for character, including a project in collaboration with The Scout Association piloting a co-curricular intervention in six UK schools, supported by the Department for Education. His research has been published in peer-reviewed journals and covered by the BBC, the Times Educational Supplement, the Telegraph, the Guardian and the Economist. He is Editor of the Demos Quarterly, Demos's magazine of political ideas, and previously oversaw external communications at Demos.

Professor James Arthur, Director, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham

James Arthur is Head of the School of Education and Professor of Education and Civic Engagement and Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues. James has been Head of the School of Education since 2010. He is Editor of the British Journal of Educational Studies and Director of CitizED. He has written widely on the relationship between theory and practice in education, particularly the links between communitarianism, social virtues, citizenship, religion and education. He previously directed the Learning for Life project which completed the largest UK-based study into issues surrounding character development, looking at over 70,000 responses from young people aged 3-25.

About Demos

Demos is Britain's leading cross-party think tank. We produce original research, publish innovative thinkers and host thought-provoking events. We have spent 20 years at the centre of the policy debate, with an overarching mission to bring politics closer to people.

In line with our mission, Demos delivers an incisive and broad-ranging programme of events across all three party conferences. Using fresh and innovative formats, Demos is able to deliver intellectually stimulating events that feature the most interesting speakers, are attended by the key stakeholders in a specific field, and are relevant to contemporary policy debates.

About Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtue

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues is part of the School of Education at the University of Birmingham.

The Jubilee Centre is a pioneering interdisciplinary research centre focusing on character, virtues and values in the interest of human flourishing. The Centre promotes a moral concept of character in order to explore the importance of virtue for public and professional life. The Centre is a leading informant on policy and practice in this area and through its extensive range of projects contributes to a renewal of character and values in both individuals and societies.

Additional Information

LOCATION MAP

