

## Schools must teach children character and values, a new poll shows.

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More than eight out of ten parents believe schools should teach children character and values alongside academic study, a new survey has found.

**A Populus poll of 1,001 parents** (<http://jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/character-education/Populus%20Parents%20Study%20-%20short.pdf>), carried out for The Jubilee Centre for Character and Values, based in the University of Birmingham, found overwhelming public support for schools delivering character education.

The survey revealed that:

- 87% of parents said schools should focus on character development and academic study, not simply academic study alone
- 81% of parents wanted schools to have a core statement of the values that schools instilled in their pupils
- 84% of parents said teachers should encourage good morals and values in pupils

**Professor James Arthur** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/education/arthur-james.aspx>), Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Values, said: "There is a strong belief among parents that schools should promote character alongside academic study. Parents want teachers to set a moral example and they want schools to teach character.

"Many schools don't know how to teach character. They might have a statement of values but too often they are bland paragraphs that have little impact on what goes on in the classroom

"The Jubilee Centre has produced a rigorous, evidence-based and philosophically-sound framework for character education that is designed to help heads and teachers introduce effective character education in their schools. This will enable them to meet parents' expectations ensure students are able to develop their character strengths as much as their intellectual abilities."

David Carr, one of the Centre's educational philosophers said the poll finding came as no surprise.

"The importance of encouraging children to be honest, tolerant and fair is clear for although not all children will develop an interest in or a need for science, for example, all human beings require an interest in honesty or fairness."

### Notes to Editors

For more information please contact **University of Birmingham press office** (<mailto:pressoffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk>) on 0121 414 9041

• Tom Harrison, Deputy Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Values, is available by telephone and email from Thursday 29th August – Monday 9th September on 0121 414 4812 or 07900477096. Email: [t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk](mailto:t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk)

• **The Jubilee Centre for Character and Values** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/education/jubilee-centre/index.aspx>) is the first UK centre dedicated to research into the character, values and virtues that shape UK society. The over-arching aim of the new centre is to contribute to the renewal of character and values in Britain through research and development activities.

• The Centre commissioned a survey of 1,001 parents, by Populus, which asks parents what they think about teaching their children about morals and virtues in the classroom, and a school's role in building character and encouraging good values in its students.