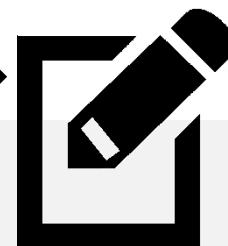


WHAT THE BRAP?

Help me understand the Trojan Horse Affair!

For more detail on the findings and conclusions of these reports, read our briefing [The Trojan Horse Reports: An Overview of Equality Issues](#).

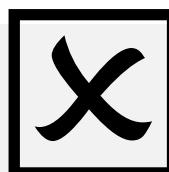


REPORTS WERE PUBLISHED...

In June 2014, following Ofsted inspections of a number of Birmingham schools, five were placed in special measures. The Ofsted reports concluded there was evidence of an organised campaign to target certain schools, and that some governors attempted to "impose and promote a narrow faith-based ideology."

Birmingham City Council's report found no evidence of extremism, radicalisation, or an anti-British agenda being promoted. But it did say in a number of schools evidence was found of the 'five steps' for destabilising school leadership outlined in the original letter. The report also warned of governance issues, criticising "improper" behaviour of governors.

The Department for Education's report was first leaked to the *Guardian*, and was referenced as saying there was evidence of an agenda to introduce "an intolerant and aggressive Islamist ethos" to schools in Birmingham. The officially released report also said it found no evidence of violent extremism, but concluded there were "a number of people in positions of influence who either espoused, or sympathised with or failed to challenge extremist views".



PEOPLE CRITICISED EACH OTHER...

At least five different agencies began investigations into the allegations made in the letter, including Ofsted, the Department for Education, the Education Funding Agency, Birmingham City Council, and West Midlands Police.

The governors of Park View Educational Trust (responsible for some of the schools implicated) described the investigations as a "witch hunt". The Trust's chair claimed three board members resigned because of a "co-ordinated and vicious attack" by the Department for Education.

The West Midlands Police criticised the DfE for appointing a former head of counter terrorism to lead the investigations, saying that it sent the wrong message about the meaning of the investigations.

The Education Select Committee criticised the investigation process saying there was a lack of co-ordination between the various studies, and suggested there was no evidence of a plot. The DfE in turn criticised the Committee for "downplaying" the seriousness of the Trojan Horse Affair and "undermining" efforts to tackle extremism.



AN ANONYMOUS LETTER SPARKS INVESTIGATION...

In March 2014 the *Guardian*, BBC, *Daily Mail*, and *Sunday Times* all splashed with the story of an Islamic plot to take over state schools in Birmingham. The story arose because Birmingham City Council received a copy of a letter supposedly advising fundamentalist radicals on how to overthrow head teachers and replace them with leaders willing to run schools on strict Islamic principles. The letter called this process 'Operation Trojan Horse'.

We first wrote about the so-called Trojan Horse plot in March 2014. The paper – [The Plot Thickens: Rights and Religion in an Age of Uncertainty](#) – talked about the need for a discussion of how we place equality at the heart of education.



NEW POLICY WAS MADE...

Since the 2002 Education Act all schools have had a duty to promote the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of their pupils. Following the Trojan Horse Affair, Michael Gove announced that all schools would, from September 2014 onwards, also have a duty to 'actively promote fundamental British values' as part of the way they meet their SMSC responsibilities. Government guidance on promoting fundamental British values states "It is expected that pupils should understand that while different people may hold different views about what is 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law".

AND NOW...?

The British Values announcement sparked a conversation about what British Values are and how they should be taught that is still ongoing. When asked what British values are David Cameron said, "I would say freedom, tolerance, respect for the rule of law, belief in personal and social responsibility, and respect for British institutions - those are the sorts of things that I would hope would be inculcated into the curriculum in any school in Britain".