



## Foreword from Baroness Barran

Education plays a vital role in promoting integration and preparing children and young people for life in a modern and diverse Britain, with schools and colleges, in particular, at the heart of our communities, bringing families from all walks of life together.

This is why all schools in England have a duty to promote community cohesion, and why schools and colleges are required to actively promote the Fundamental British Values of: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

We recognise that many schools and colleges already successfully promote community cohesion, creating inclusive environments, where our children and young people are able to gain the skills and knowledge they need, and learn the values that underpin our society. Many schools and colleges have also continued to do this in the face of the unprecedented challenges of recent years – from the COVID-19 pandemic to the Ukraine crisis. However, we want to ensure we are levelling up education standards so that children and young people in every part of the country have this experience.

Following the Government’s Integrated Communities Strategy in 2018, and subsequent Action Plan in 2019, the Department for Education committed to continuing to support teachers, school and college leaders in the fulfilment of their duties in connection with promoting community cohesion. This included the commissioning of this independent report, in 2020, to identify how schools and colleges are promoting integration in the classroom and the evidence behind these approaches. The report was compiled independently by Professor Emeritus Miles Hewstone, as an expert in social relations, alongside an independent panel of practitioners, specialists and academics in the field.

It should be noted that where a substantial proportion of this report was conducted during the pandemic, it was not possible for the approaches identified to be fully examined in the school and college environment, nor discussed directly with schools or colleges. The findings of the report therefore make clear that not all of the approaches that schools and colleges are using to support community cohesion have been robustly evaluated, and that there is consequently limited evidence that these interventions “work” in isolation. However, we hope that this report will support teachers and school and college leaders to make more informed decisions on which approaches might be most appropriate for their pupils or students, and the best use of their time and resources.

Schools and colleges should be aware when considering this report that the Department for Education is not endorsing the independent resources and external agencies mentioned in this report. We generally do not advise or direct schools or colleges on what materials they

should be using, but it is important that teachers and school and college leaders carefully consider whether resources, and the organisations that produce them, are suitable for their pupils, students, and wider community context.

Therefore, when schools and colleges are considering implementing one of the interventions detailed in this report, we would still expect them to make reasonable decisions about the content of their curriculum and comply with all their legal obligations; including for schools to comply with their duty to remain politically impartial.

**Baroness Barran**

**Minister for the School System and Student Finance**

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