

International Handbook of Learning, Teaching and Leading in Faith-Based Schools

Judith D. Chapman • Sue McNamara
Michael J. Reiss • Yusef Waghid
Editors

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Foreword

Debates about ‘faith schools’ are familiar enough these days. Unfortunately, they often reflect myths and half-truths – and even their defenders have not always been forthcoming with detailed research and extended discussion of likely or desirable outcomes. It is important to know exactly what it is that ‘faith-based’ schools contribute to our society; those who support them believe passionately that they encourage a holistic style of pastoral care and that they keep alive in society an awareness that religious belief is not a museum piece. Whether you are a believer or not, this matters: to begin to see how it is that religious commitment shapes culture and vision is to begin to be properly literate about the sort of world we actually live in, and to see more fully some of the resources that can deepen human existence. But we need to have clear grounds for insisting that schools with religious affiliation do not – for example – promote the ghettoizing of our society, or discourage a critical spirit, or marginalize proper science, or whatever the favourite stereotype may be.

So a book like this is enormously timely. Here we have an impressive range of careful discussion, looking at what sort of impact can be expected from schools with religious affiliation, what sort of communities they help to support or create and what they do for the diversity, well-being and moral energy of our society. I hope these essays will be very widely read, and that they will help us to have a more intelligent discussion about the subject and a more realistic appreciation of their aims and methods.

Rowan Williams
Former Archbishop of Canterbury

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2014

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