Is there such a thing as a Christian pedagogy?

Brisbane Catholic Education
Masterclass
26th July 2016
Professor Trevor Cooling
Spaced Learning

An exam module in 60 minutes?

Making memories stick - insights from neuroscience
The Regions of the Brain

What happens to people’s thoughts when they die?
Christian Ethos

- Ambience
- Curriculum Content
- Pedagogy
Pedagogy

Pedagogy is the act of teaching together with its attendant discourse of educational theories, values, evidence and justifications. It is what one needs to know and the skills one needs to command, in order to make and justify the many kinds of decision of which teaching is constituted.

Robin Alexander
Pedagogy is the heart of the enterprise. It gives life to educational aims and values, lifts the curriculum from the printed page, mediates knowing and learning, engages, inspires and empowers learners…or sadly fails to do so…Good teaching makes a difference. Excellent teaching can transform lives.

Robin Alexander
The Importance of Perspective (Worldview)

Young Woman or Old Woman?
Nicky Morgan’s CBI Speech

- This government is committed to making sure every child can compete with their international peers - securing their future, and the economic security of our country.

- For too long, our young people were left behind their counterparts from other countries.

9 November 2015
Values for Australian Schools

- Care & Compassion
- Doing Your Best
- Fair Go
- Freedom
- Honesty & Trustworthiness
- Integrity
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Understanding, Tolerance & Inclusion
The Challenge

Unwitting compliance with values and principles that may compromise those that they seek to promote (Helen Jelfs)

Have assimilated the prevailing educational paradigm (Roger Street)
What Makes My School Special

- Very small school.
- Everyone knows everyone.
- Very Christian.

Excellence in everything.
- Truth
- Love
- Learning habits...
- Resilience
- Teamwork!
- Love

Kindly,
- Everyone knows everyone
- Everyone friendly
- Including staff
- What were you thinking
- Never ask why

Justice
- Talking about problems.

Restorative

Person of the week

Worship or form time

Wisdom

Hope

Truth
The Church of England
Bearing God’s Image

I have come that you might have life in all its fullness
(John 10:10)

- Wisdom
- Hope & Aspiration
- Community & Living Well Together
- Dignity & Respect
Is there a Christian way to Teach the Push-Pass?
Is there a Christian way to Teach the Push-Pass?

- We were learning how to encourage someone else in their skill development.
- Coaching as the framing concept
What If Learning
The approach

Seeing anew:
How could a Christian understanding of God, people and the world provide a different way of seeing a lesson/unit?

Choosing Engagement:
How could the students engage with this new way of seeing?

Reshaping practice:
What changes to my practice do I need to make as a teacher?
Why are we doing this?

- One responds: “I am cutting this stone in a perfectly square shape.” The other responds: “I am building a cathedral.”

- Their experiences of what they are doing and their sense of self in doing it are rather different. This difference is a function of imagination. As a result, they may be learning very different things from the same activity. (Wenger, 1998, p.176)
Honouring Parents

From self-absorption to awareness of parental role
Primary Character Project

- Government values of respect, tolerance, community spirit and neighbourliness
- Hospitality
Hospitality

- Being good listeners
- Able to explain why certain things are important to other people
- Being good welcomers
- Empathy (walking in others shoes)
- Expressing their own views with respectful conviction
- Able to adapt to unfamiliar circumstances in appropriate ways.
- Welcoming the stranger
- Generosity of spirit and action
- Desire and ability to promote the common good
Curiosity towards other people’s views.

“We need to communicate well with each other as each other’s opinion counts”
Measures (Pupils)

- A measure of intergroup attitudes using ambiguous situations. For each of four consecutively presented pictures, participants had to choose which option they preferred as the most appropriate description. We also asked after each picture:
  - How good/bad was the behaviour displayed
  - What do you think “Liz” (the actor) is going to do next
  - How good/bad is this future behaviour?
What do you think is the best way to describe the picture above?

- Liz is looking at Zoe
- Liz has pushed Zoe off the swing
- Liz doesn't like Zoe
- Liz is mean
Preparation for Adult Life

CAREER

VOCATION

Come, Follow Me!
The Regions of the Brain

What happens to people’s thoughts when they die?