

Study of Religion in schools 'is an invaluable help in the project of building the common good'

The Most Reverend Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, is to say that the possible omission of Religious Studies and Education from the proposed E-Baccalaureate system of secondary school exams and assessment is 'indefensible'.



In a wide-ranging lecture on the subject of 'Faith in Education', to be given at Guildford Cathedral on the evening of 11 March 2011, he will say that the study of Religion 'is an invaluable help in the project of building the common good and of self-fulfilment. Without this appreciation we are condemned to be endlessly starting again and, no doubt, repeating mistakes and pursuing blind alleys.'

In relation to community schools, Archbishop Nichols will say that 'The place of Religious Studies ...will surely suffer despite its growing popularity since in the E-Bac measure, pupils' achievement in GCSE RS will count for naught.In an increasingly confusing world, Religious Studies gives young people perhaps their only opportunity to engage seriously not only with the most profound philosophical questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality, but also with the most fundamental ethical dilemmas of our day. Religious Studies is a demanding subject requiring knowledge and skills in history, the critical use of texts, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology. Its deliberate omission from any measure seeking to ensure that pupils receive a genuinely broad education is indefensible.'

The Guildford Cathedral lecture echoes a theme in a homily given at Westminster Cathedral on 3 March when Archbishop Nichols highlighted the possible exclusion of Religious Education from the core subjects of the proposed new Baccalaureate.

[The full text of the lecture, the second in Guildford cathedral's 'Faith in the Public Arena' lecture series..](#)



Most Rev. Vincent Nichols - RCDOW