



School's now focus firmly on what divides us, not what we share in common

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Kevin Donnelly in *The Australian* on Tuesday argued that it's now clear that the education sector's 'politically correct embrace of diversity and difference – the new code for multiculturalism – reigns supreme':

As reported in yesterday's *The Australian*, school officials at Sydney's Hurstville Boys Campus, based on a literal interpretation of a hadith, told Muslim students that it was permissible to refuse to greet females in the customary way.

So much for the Christian admonition "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". And so much for the fact that Australian society only prospers and grows when there is a shared understanding of what constitutes civility and good manners.

... Education now embraces identity politics where the rights and privileges of

particular individuals and groups nominated by the cultural Left are granted positive discrimination... Whereas in times past schools would teach all students about the values, beliefs and institutions that bind us as a nation and the debt owed to Western culture, the focus is now firmly on what divides us instead of what we share in common. Even worse, instead of their arguments being properly analysed and evaluated, anyone questioning multicultural groupthink is quickly condemned as Islamophobic, racist and intolerant.

As noted by the British journalist and author Patrick West: "Tolerance in the name of relativism has become its own intolerance. We are commended to respect all differences and anyone who dis-agrees shall be shouted down, silenced or slandered as a racist. Everyone must be tolerant. And that's an order."

The Australian National Curriculum advocates identity politics and the belief that all cultures must be treated equally. Christianity, instead of being acknowledged as one of the foundation stones on which Western culture rests and continues to depend, receives the same weighting as Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism.

While the National Curriculum stipulates that subjects and areas of learning must celebrate diversity and difference, with a special focus on Asian and indigenous perspectives, scant time or attention is given to the history and significance of liberalism within the Western tradition.

The NSW Statement of Equity Principles endorsed by the recently established Education Standards Council also illustrates the way education has been captured by the cultural Left's long march through the institutions. The school syllabus, associated materials and assessment guidelines all focus on "difference and diversity in the Australian community" where all must be respected and treated equally regardless of "cultural and linguistic heritage, gender, age, beliefs, socio-economic status, location, sexuality or disability".

... Multiculturalism ignores the reality that some cultural practices and beliefs are un-Australian and that unless we want to follow the example of Britain and Europe, where the policy has led to ethnic ghettos, violence and social fragmentation, education must teach how to discriminate between what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable beliefs and values. There is also the irony that the very values that cultural relativists champion, such as tolerance and respect for others, are culturally specific. The liberties and freedoms we take for granted are embedded in Western culture, our Judeo-Christian heritage, and historical movements like the Enlightenment.

You can read the [full article here](#) (\$)