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Professor Michael Hand

Professor of Philosophy of Education
Director of Postgraduate Research

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About

Michael Hand is Professor of Philosophy of Education and Director of Postgraduate Research in the School of Education. He is the Editor of **IMPACT (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)2048-416X)** , a pamphlet series offering philosophical perspectives on current education policy. Michael's research interests are in the areas of moral, political, religious and philosophical education. He has published books and articles on education for patriotism, the nature and aims of religious education, the justifiability of faith schools, autonomy as an educational aim, philosophy in schools, teaching about sexuality, and controversial issues in the classroom. He is currently working on a theory of moral education.

The Birmingham School of Education has a long tradition of work in philosophy of education and it is currently home to one of the largest groups of **philosophers of education (/research/activity/education/philosophy/index.aspx)** in the UK.

Qualifications

- DPhil in Philosophy of Education, University of Oxford
- MSc in Educational Research Methodology, University of Manchester
- PGCE in Primary Education, Open University
- BA Hons in Theology and Religious Studies, University of Cambridge

Teaching

- **BA Education (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/edu/childhood-culture-education.aspx)**

Postgraduate supervision

Michael supervises doctoral students working in the field of philosophy of education. The substantive topics on which his past and present doctoral students have worked include faith-based education, spiritual education, philosophy in schools, education for patriotism, academic freedom in higher education, ministerial training, and the interface between science and religion.

For more information on research degrees, please visit the **Postgraduate Research (/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/index.aspx)** pages.

PhD opportunities

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Research

Michael's current research is on moral education. His project is to develop a theory of cognitive moral education, an account of whether and how moral beliefs should be imparted to students. A pressing question is whether cognitive moral education can avoid indoctrination. Is it possible to impart moral beliefs in such a way that they are held on the basis of appropriate and sufficient reasons, or is the process of moral belief transmission necessarily subrational and manipulative? The idea pursued in the project is that moral beliefs can be robustly justified with reference to their success in alleviating what David Copp has called the 'problem of sociality', and that students can be brought to hold moral beliefs on that basis. Roughly, the problem of sociality is the permanent threat to social cooperation posed by human vulnerability, limited resources and limited sympathies, and moral beliefs are justified when widespread subscription to the standards they articulate reliably averts that threat. The claim that this way of justifying moral beliefs is an appropriate foundation for non-indoctrinatory cognitive moral education does not rule out the possibility of there being other successful approaches to moral belief justification.

Publications

Selected publications

Hand, M. (2013) 'Framing classroom discussion of same-sex marriage', in *Educational Theory* 63 (5), pp.497-510.

Hand, M. (2012) A new dawn for faith-based education? Opportunities for religious organisations in the UK's new school system', *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 46 (4), p.546-559. **DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9752.2012.00878.x (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.2012.00878.x)**

Hand, M. (2012) 'What's in a worldview? On Trevor Cooling's *Doing God in Education*', in *Oxford Review of Education* 38 (5), pp.527-537. DOI: **DOI: 10.1080/03054985.2012.722862 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2012.722862)**

Hand, M. (2011) Patriotism in Schools (IMPACT 19). *Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain.* **DOI: 10.1111/j.2048-416X.2011.00001.x (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.2048-416X.2011.00001.x)**

Hand, M. (2011) Should we promote patriotism in schools?, *Political Studies* 59 (2), 328-347. **DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9248.2010.00855.x (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2010.00855.x)**

Hand, M. (2009) On the worthwhileness of theoretical activities, *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 43 (s2), 109-121. (Reprinted in Cuypers, S.E. & Martin, C. (eds) Reading R.S. Peters Today: analysis, ethics and the aims of education, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, pp.106-118.) **DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9752.2009.00732.x (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.2009.00732.x)**

Hand, M. (2009) What should go on the curriculum? in Bailey, R. (ed), ***Philosophy of Education: An Introduction* (http://www.continuumbooks.com/books/detail.aspx?BookId=131765&SubjectId=940&Subject2Id=940)** . London: Continuum, pp.48-59.

Hand, M. (2008) What should we teach as controversial? A defence of the epistemic criterion, *Educational Theory* 58 (2), pp.213-228. **DOI: 10.1111/j.1741-5446.2008.00285.x (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.2008.00285.x)**

Hand, M. (2008) Can children be taught philosophy? in Hand, M. & Winstanley, C. (eds), ***Philosophy in Schools* (http://www.continuumbooks.com/books/detail.aspx?BookId=136176)** . London: Continuum, pp.3-17.

Hand, M. (2007) 'Should we teach homosexuality as a controversial issue?', in *Theory and Research in Education* 5 (1), pp.69-86. **DOI: 10.1177/1477878507073614 (http://tre.sagepub.com/content/5/1/69.short)**

Hand, M. (2006) ***Is Religious Education Possible? A philosophical investigation (http://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/is-religious-education-possible-9780826491503/)*** , London: Continuum.

Full publication list for Professor Michael Hand (/Documents/college-social-sciences/education/publications/hand-michael.pdf) (PDF, opens new window)

Expertise

Philosophy of education; moral, political, religious and philosophical education; education for patriotism, teaching sexuality; the aims of religious education; faith schools; philosophy for children; teaching of controversial issues.

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