

Invitation to Book Launch

AUTHORITY AND THE TEACHER

By **William H. Kitchen** (wkitchen01@qub.ac.uk)

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Date: Wednesday 29th October 2014
Venue: Canada Room, Council Chamber (Lanyon Building), QUB
Time: 2:00pm – 5:00pm

Speakers:
William H. Kitchen
Professor Frank Furedi
Mr Robert McCartney QC

RSVP to Jan Speer (School of Education) at: jan.speer@qub.ac.uk
(028 9097 3041) before 25th September 2014

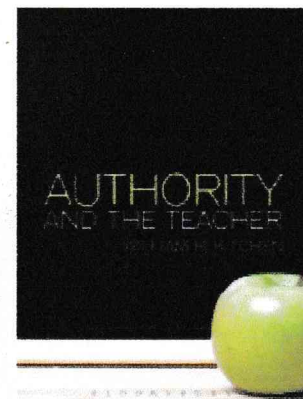
Authority and the Teacher

By William H. Kitchen

With a foreword by Sir Chris Woodhead

The notion of authority in education has become an increasingly negative concept, regarded by some as championed only by rigid traditionalists and those who cling on to outdated educational theory and philosophy. *Authority and the Teacher* seeks to overturn the notion that authority is a restrictive force within education, serving only to stifle creativity and drown out the voice of the student. William H. Kitchen argues that any education must have, as one of its cornerstones, a component which encourages the fullest development of knowledge, which serves as the great educational emancipator. In this version of knowledge-driven education, the teacher's authority should be absolute, so as to ensure that the teacher has the scope to liberate their pupils. The pupil, in the avoidance of ignorance, can thus embrace what is rightfully theirs; the inheritance of intellectual riches passed down through time.

By invoking the work of three major philosophers – Polanyi, Oakeshott and Wittgenstein – as well as contributions from other key thinkers on authority, William Kitchen underpins previous claims for the need for authority in education with the philosophical clout necessary to ensure these arguments permeate modern mainstream educational thinking.



Speaker Biographies:

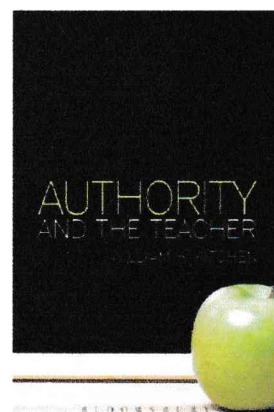
William H. Kitchen is a qualified mathematics teacher having attained his MSci in mathematics with First Class Honours from The Queen's University of Belfast, and his P.G.C.E from the same institution. He has taught in various schools in Northern Ireland, most recently in Methodist College, Belfast and Wallace High School, Lisburn. He is currently working towards his Ph.D at the School of Education, Queen's. His main research interest is in offering philosophical critiques of the role which neuroscience can (or cannot) play in educational policy and practice. His doctoral work focuses on unifying ideas in Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind and Bohr's philosophy of Quantum Physics to undermine the current trend of Cartesian-Newtonian approaches to education. *Authority and the Teacher* is the first of a series of educational texts which William hopes to publish within the next few years.



Emeritus Professor Frank Furedi is a provocative sociologist and social commentator. He was formerly Professor of Sociology at The University of Kent. His research is oriented towards the study of the workings of precautionary culture and risk aversion in Western societies. His books have explored controversies and panics over issues such as health, children, food, new technology, terrorism, and education. Some of his recent books are: *First World War: Still no end in sight* (2014), *Authority: A Sociological History* (2013), *Wasted: Why education isn't educating* (2010), and *Where have all the intellectuals gone?* (2006). Frank completed his PhD in Research and his MA in African Politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and also holds a BA in Political Science.



Robert McCartney QC is the Chairman of the National Grammar Schools Association (NGSA) in the UK, and has long been a vocal advocate of academic selection and of traditional grammar school education in Northern Ireland. He is a former student of Grosvenor Grammar School, and has had a distinguished career as a barrister and Queen's Councillor, as a local politician, and as an MP.



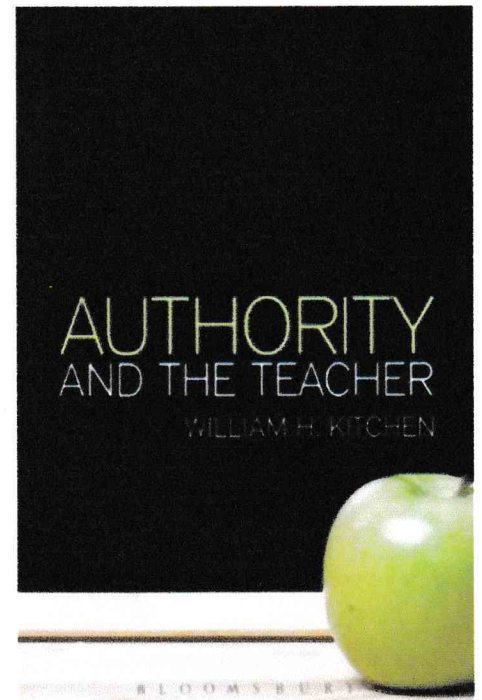
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Schedule

- 1:45pm – 2:00pm** **Arrival and Registration**
- 2:00pm – 2:10pm** **Welcome**
Professor Paul Connolly, Head of School of Education
- 2:10pm – 2:50pm** **Authority and the Teacher**
William H. Kitchen
- 2:50pm – 3:30pm** **The death of the progressive, constructivist curriculum in Northern Ireland**
Mr Robert McCartney QC
- 3:30pm – 3:50pm** **Break**
- 3:50pm – 4:30pm** **Sociological and Historical Authority**
Professor Frank Furedi
- 4:30pm – 5:00pm** **Discussion and Questions**

The talks will focus primarily on the role which authority can play in modern-day education, especially given the recent surge of anti-authority approaches to education.

William H. Kitchen will focus on the charge of anti-authority and anti-knowledge approaches to education, seeking to recalibrate the argument of so-called 'child-centred education' with a focus on what it means to be truly child-centred. It will be argued that what is often sold to the educational audience as child-centred is, in fact, incoherent and conceptually and methodologically weak. As such, child-centred education will be properly defined, set inside a traditional educational paradigm, rather than the progressive ideology and constructivist theory which currently underpins it. This talk will focus on the core arguments in this debate from Bantock, Peters, Polanyi, Oakeshott and Wittgenstein, acting as a summary of the core arguments found in *Authority and the Teacher*. A detailed synopsis of the other talks will be provided on the day in the information pack.



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