

PRESS RELEASE: Monday 12th February 2018



Claystone Latest Report Raises Concerns that Faith Schools are Being Deliberately Targeted by Ofsted

Report: *'Losing Faith in Ofsted'*

Over the last few years there has been a concerted effort by Ofsted, the schools' regulator, to ensure that 'British Values' are actively promoted in schools. Through the use of no-notice inspections, a very narrow set of poorly understood values, are being imposed on schools across the country. Where schools are deemed to not be implementing these values, they can be closed down.

Report author, Dr Umer Siddique, said today: "In the report due to be published tomorrow our exclusive findings show that faith schools are being disproportionately targeted by these no-notice inspections. Within this cohort of faith schools, Muslim faith schools in particular, have borne the brunt of these inspections. This has created a climate of fear, intimidation and a sense of discrimination."

Dr Siddique added: "Recent comments by the chief inspector of schools in England, Amanda Spielman, where she suggested that religious fundamentalists wanted to "indoctrinate impressionable minds," were both alarming and largely unfounded. Such sensationalist comments must raise concerns that this targeting of faith schools may well be ideologically driven."

He further added: "Where schools are performing poorly then clearly this needs to be reversed. But this sense of fear around projecting a particular, legitimate, religious identity cannot be tolerated and Ofsted has been directly implicated in cultivating this climate. We urgently call for a government rethink of current policy, in particular with a view to shifting away from this very narrow interpretation of 'values' to a broader shared collective identity."

Notes to Editors

1. A full copy of the report is available now for Press/Media/MPs via request to: press@claystone.org.uk
2. Public release scheduled for 12.00pm, Tuesday 13th February. Download on the Claystone website: www.claystone.org.uk/publications
3. For more information, please contact the Claystone Press Office on press@claystone.org.uk
4. Claystone is an independent think tank formed to offer research, analysis and reasoned solutions to foster social cohesion in relation to Muslims in Britain.