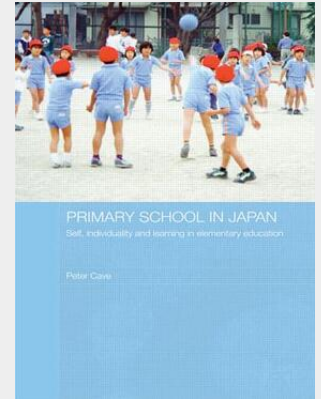


Cave

Primary School in Japan

Self, Individuality and Learning in Elementary Education

The balance between individual independence and social interdependence is a perennial debate in Japan. A series of educational reforms since 1990, including the implementation of a new curriculum in 2002, has been a source of fierce controversy. This book, based on an extended, detailed study of two primary schools in the Kinki district of Japan, discusses these debates, shows how reforms have been implemented at the school level, and explores how the balance between individuality and social interdependence is managed in practice. It discusses these complex issues in relation to personal identity within the class and within the school, in relation to gender issues, and in relation to the teaching of specific subjects, including language, literature and mathematics. The book concludes that, although recent reforms have tended to stress individuality and independence, teachers in primary schools continue to balance the encouragement of individuality and self-direction with the development of interdependence and empathy.



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