

Faith schools undermine equality, choice and social cohesion.

Let's build an inclusive education system today, to ensure an inclusive society tomorrow.

Our education system should be open and welcoming to all. That's why we want publicly funded faith schools phased out and an end to religiously selective school admissions.

Around a third of publicly funded schools in England and Wales are faith schools – schools with a religious character. Scottish and Northern Irish schools are still divided along sectarian lines.

Separating children according to religion is divisive and leads to religious, ethnic and socio-economic segregation.

To make matters worse, **many faith schools can discriminate against pupils and teachers who do not share the religion of the school.**

- **[58%](#) of Brits oppose faith schools and only 30% say they have "no objection" to faith schools being funded by the state.**
- **[72%](#) of voters, including 68% of Christians, oppose state funded schools being allowed to discriminate against prospective pupils on religious grounds in their admissions policy.**

Parents are entitled to raise their children within a faith tradition, but they are not entitled to enlist the help of the state to do so. The state should not allow the schools it funds to inculcate children into a particular religion.

Faith schools seriously limit choice for parents who do not want a religious education for their children, or do not share the faith of the local school. Our research has [found](#) that 18,000 families were assigned faith schools against their wishes in England in 2017 alone.

Despite a consistent and dramatic decline in church attendance, and a growing majority of non-religious citizens, successive governments have paved the way for ever greater religious involvement in education, often to the detriment of inclusive community schools.

A secular approach to education would ensure publicly funded schools are equally welcoming to all children, regardless of their backgrounds.

Take action!

CAMPAIGN ALERT: Tell Labour to think again on faith schools

Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer [recently stated](#) he "wouldn't tinker" with how faith schools are run, and that Labour would be "even more supportive of faith schools" than the current government.

Join us in calling on Labour to think again on faith schools. Write to your Labour MP or representative today.

- [Write now!](#)

1. Write to your MP

Please call on your MP to support a secular, inclusive education system for all.

Enter Postcode:

Find my MP

- [Other representatives](#)

We also have template letters to write to your Members of the Scottish or Welsh Parliaments or Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly.

2. Share your story

Tell us why you support this campaign, and how you are personally affected by the issue. You can also let us know if you would like assistance with a particular issue.

- [Share your story](#)

3. Join us

Become a member of the National Secular Society today! Together, we can separate religion and state for greater freedom and fairness.

- [Join us!](#)

Latest updates

[NSS announces major conference on protecting liberal values](#)

Posted: Wed, 17 Apr 2024 10:33

Kenan Malik, Joan Smith and more speaking at NSS Secularism 2024 conference in London.

[NSS joins open letter against faith school discrimination](#)

Posted: Sun, 14 Apr 2024 18:45

Education experts, politicians, religious leaders and public figures unite to call on Education Secretary to keep the faith school admissions cap.

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More information

- [Faith schools - Frequently Asked Questions](#)

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- [Guide to different types of schools in the UK](#)

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- [Protect relationships and sex education](#)

Age-appropriate relationships and sex education should be every child's right.

[Read More](#)

- [Remove religious appointees from Scottish councils](#)

Religion shouldn't grant people privileged places in local democracy.

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- [Tell Labour: Think again on faith schools](#)

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Research and reports

- [The faith schools research bank](#)

[Read More](#)

- [The choice delusion: how faith schools restrict school choice](#)

Three in ten families across England live in areas where most or all of the closest primary schools are faith schools and thousands are being assigned faith schools against their wishes.

[Read More](#)

- [Power grab: Academisation and the threat to secular education](#)

Academisation has enabled faith groups to increase their influence over all schools, including those with no religious character. With little public debate, religious governance has increased, while secular oversight has diminished.

[Read More](#)

- [Religiosity inspections: the case against faith-based reviews of state schools](#)

Faith based inspections of state schools are an unnecessary drain on public funds, frame widely held values as exclusive, and promote biased religious education.

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- [Faith-shaped holes: How religious privilege is undermining equality law](#) ([PDF](#), 1.3 Mb)