

Majority want secular state schooling – while RE declines

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The majority of British people want state-funded schools to be secular, a recent YouGov poll has revealed.

The poll, conducted on behalf of *Prospect* magazine, asked whether the Government should "make all state schools secular and stop them having special links with the Christian, Jewish, Muslim or any other religion". Nearly half of those surveyed (48%) agreed that state schools should be entirely secular. Those opposing stood at 38%, while an additional 14% said they "don't know".

Support for secular state schools was strongest in Scotland, with 63% in favour. Opposition was at its highest in the North, at 43%.

The question was posed as part of a wider survey on education. The poll also found strong support for a ban on schools supplying unhealthy food and drink (72%) and mobile phones in the classroom (83%). Three quarters expressed their support for a return to "traditional" history teaching covering the main dates and events in British history and teaching students "to be proud of Britain's past".

[See the complete poll](#) (pdf).

Meanwhile, the Government's introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is having a negative impact on school provision of non-EBacc subjects, including religious education (RE), according to a new survey of schoolteachers.

Among respondents, 13% reported a decline in provision for RE in their schools as a consequence of the EBacc (3% more than recorded that their schools were planning to cut RE in a similar survey in May 2011). Comparable reductions in provision for other non-EBacc subjects were: 14% for citizenship, music, and personal, social and health education; 15% for information and communication technology; and 16% for art and design and technology.

Source: Online survey of over 2,500 schoolteachers by the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), the largest teachers' union.

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