

Spanish public schools to “inculcate” children of Muslim parents with “Islamic worldview”

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The Spanish government has announced plans for a massive taxpayer-funded Islamic religious education programme which will promote 'moderate' Islam in schools to tackle Islamic extremism.

New guidelines approved by the Spanish Ministry of Education seek to spark "interest for Islamic religious and cultural texts" among the children of Muslim parents and stir "curiosity for the Koran in oral and written language" while challenging pupils to learn "Islamic recitations, narrations and descriptions."

Soeren Kern, an analyst who writes for the [Gatestone Institute](#), says that the guidelines are "being touted as a way to prevent Muslim children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by exposing them to a 'moderate' interpretation of Islam."

But in an [article](#) for the Gatestone Institute, Kern said that Spanish "taxpayers are being expected to pay for the religious education of up to 300,000 Muslim students between the ages of 3 and 18" when the Spanish government may have no oversight over what is actually being taught.

The new [guidelines](#) for Islamic teaching in Spanish public schools state that the teachers will be designated and chosen by local Islamic communities and that the content of Islamic religious teaching and the textbooks used in classes will be 'provided by the respective communities' and approved by the Islamic Commission of Spain.

'Determining the curriculum' and measuring achievement will also be under the purview of 'religious authorities'.

Kern cautioned that the new plan "amounts to a government-approved program to establish a full-fledged Islamic studies curriculum at public schools nationwide" and is "the most ambitious in all of Europe".

Children will be encouraged to "emulate" the "values" of Mohammed and will study the "achievements" of Islamic civilization – including the [Cairo Declaration](#), the international treaty that stipulated "rights and freedoms" are "subject to the Islamic Shari'ah."

National Secular Society spokesperson Benjamin Jones said that the "UK has also experimented with handing over vast swathes of our education system to religious groups, with some appalling results."

He added that it was "very unwise" of the Spanish government to pursue any policy which "marked pupils out on the basis of their parents' faith" and "denied them the opportunity to form their own philosophical beliefs."

"I am extremely sceptical about a state-sanctioned so-called 'moderate Islam' being of any use in countering Islamic extremism. Muslims must reform their faith, not only to avert extremism, but to resist theocracy and the imposition of religion on others – which is, in some ways, a much more widespread and significant problem. I do not think that the state can be of any use in promulgating an 'approved' version of Islam.

"What the state can do is insist that schools, in Spain, the UK and across Europe, are promoting human rights and common citizenship to build integrated societies. They shouldn't be forcing a religious identity on pupils. They certainly shouldn't be marking pupils out by their parents' religion and segregating them into different classes.

"Of course such segregation occurs throughout the education system in the UK, with pupils divided into wholly separate schools on the basis of their parents' faith. We have seen the terrible results of this already."

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