

# Author: [Alastair Lichten](#)

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## [Will the government protect the ethos of secular schools?](#)

Posted: Tue, 13 Jul 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

The Department for Education's protections for the secular community ethos of non-faith academies are inadequate. This enables a consolidation of religious control and undermines accountability, argues Alastair Lichten. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [academisation](#)

## [Schools must be supported against religious bullies](#)

Posted: Wed, 07 Jul 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

Comments from Ofsted's chief inspector highlight the need to help schools resist efforts to shut down teaching which reactionary religious groups deem controversial, says Alastair Lichten. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [LGBT rights](#), [RSE](#), [Religious education](#)

## [Requires improvement: Ofsted review shows need for a major rethink on RE](#)

Posted: Wed, 02 Jun 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

A review has highlighted significant problems with the way RE is taught. Alastair Lichten argues that it shows the need to ask fundamental questions about the purpose of education about religion. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Religious education](#)

## [Is the C of E ashamed of discrimination in school admissions?](#)

Posted: Fri, 28 May 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

Research suggests the Church of England downplays the extent of religious discrimination in admissions to the schools it runs. Its embarrassment shows the need to end this practice, says Alastair Lichten. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Admissions](#), [Discrimination](#), [Education](#), [Faith Schools](#)

## [Mandated worship can never be inclusive](#)

Posted: Wed, 19 May 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

Church of England guidance which aims to promote an 'inclusive' form of collective worship in schools misses the point and highlights the need to stop imposing religion on children, says Alastair Lichten. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Collective Worship](#), [Education](#)

## [We must find the political will to end discriminatory school admissions](#)

Posted: Mon, 12 Apr 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

As families in England prepare to find out which primary schools their children will attend, Alastair Lichten says ending faith-based discrimination would make the admissions system fairer and simpler. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Discrimination](#), [Education](#), [Faith Schools](#), [admissions](#)

## [Ending compulsory worship in schools should be next on the agenda for Wales](#)

Posted: Tue, 16 Mar 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

Following major curriculum reforms in Wales, Alastair Lichten argues that the Senedd should now turn its attention to ending the collective worship requirement in schools. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Collective Worship](#), [Education](#), [Wales](#)

## [NI's education review is a golden chance to take a stand for inclusion](#)

Posted: Thu, 25 Feb 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

Alastair Lichten says a review of education provision in Northern Ireland must be willing to challenge entrenched religious interests to deliver on ambitions for a more efficient and inclusive

system. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Northern Ireland](#)

## **Christian nationalism is a key part of Trump's legacy**

Posted: Thu, 21 Jan 2021 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

Alastair Lichten argues that understanding Christian nationalism is essential to understanding the presidency of Donald Trump and its consequences for the world. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Christian Right](#), [Opinion Out Loud](#), [USA](#)

## **The requirement to hold collective worship in schools is crumbling and not worth saving**

Posted: Thu, 05 Dec 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

After two parents forced a school trust to provide an alternative to religious assemblies for their children, Alastair Lichten says the law which requires schools to hold acts of worship needs to change. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Collective worship](#), [Education](#)

## **This isn't the time to end the right to withdraw from RE in Wales**

Posted: Thu, 14 Nov 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

The Welsh government is considering removing the parental right to withdraw from religious education. Alastair Lichten argues that despite potential benefits, reforms don't go far enough to justify ending this longstanding right. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Religious education](#), [Wales](#)

## **Education in NI shouldn't be a tug of war between religious interests**

Posted: Fri, 25 Oct 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

A report has called into question religious control over the curriculum and ethos of Northern Irish schools. Alastair Lichten says it should prompt a re-evaluation of the segregated, inefficient system which exists now. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Northern Ireland](#)

## [Anti-RSE campaigns: guidance is welcome, but schools need more support](#)

Posted: Tue, 15 Oct 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

The government has published new guidance for schools facing disruption from religious groups who oppose LGBT-inclusive education. Alastair Lichten welcomes the gesture but says the substance doesn't go far enough. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [RSE](#)

## [The government must respond to pressure to end compulsory school worship](#)

Posted: Mon, 05 Aug 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

As opposition to compulsory worship gathers and its defenders grow increasingly out of touch, Alastair Lichten says ministers should reconsider the law and its implementation. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Collective worship](#), [Education](#), [statistics](#)

## [The new education secretary must resist the reactionary campaign against RSE](#)

Posted: Thu, 25 Jul 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

The campaign against inclusive relationships and sex education risks spreading from the school gates to sympathetic faith school authorities. Alastair Lichten argues the government must act now to save the subject. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [LGBTQ rights](#), [RSE](#)

## [New guidance on independent schools: analysis of hard-line opposition and DfE concessions](#)

Posted: Fri, 03 May 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

The government has published new guidance on independent schools, amid systemic failings by independent faith schools. Alastair Lichten looks at what's changed and how the DfE has handled religious groups' demands. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Independent schools](#)

## **Integrated communities require inclusive, secular schools**

Posted: Tue, 12 Feb 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

A government plan on integration sets out a positive vision on education - but faith schools remain the elephant in the room. Alastair Lichten asks if ministers' actions will match their rhetoric. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Faith Schools](#), [Independent schools](#), [admissions](#), [unregistered schools](#)

## **Weaponised unreasonableness: father claims school standards violate his rights**

Posted: Mon, 07 Jan 2019 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

After a father threatens the government with legal action over a requirement to teach about LGBT people in independent schools, Alastair Lichten argues the focus should remain on protecting pupils' rights. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Independent schools](#), [LGBTQ rights](#)

## **Unravelling the choice delusion**

Posted: Mon, 10 Dec 2018 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

We often hear that faith schools improve choice. But an NSS report shows that this narrative mischaracterises the challenges facing families and public education's role in a diverse society, says Alastair Lichten. [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Faith Schools](#), [admissions](#)

## **We must resist both religious hatred and its weaponisation**

Posted: Thu, 18 Oct 2018 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

*After a sharp rise in reported crimes in which religious hatred was a factor, Alastair Lichten says liberal democracies should challenge hatred and bigotry while resisting attempts to silence ideas.*

According to [new figures](#) from the Home Office there were 94,098... [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Anti-Muslim bigotry](#), [Anti-Semitism](#), [Ex-Muslim](#), [Freedom of Expression](#), [Hate crime](#)

## **Church schools are faith schools. Pretending otherwise is dishonest**

Posted: Fri, 20 Jul 2018 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

*The Church of England's pretence that 'its' schools aren't faith schools is a dishonest attempt to avoid association with the unpopularity of faith-based schooling, and at odds with their actual policy, argues Alastair Lichten.*

When the term 'faith school'... [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Church of England](#), [Education](#), [Faith Schools](#)

## **Religion and politics – the discrepancy at the heart of our schools**

Posted: Tue, 12 Jun 2018 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

*Schools are forbidden from promoting, showing favouritism to or discriminating on the grounds of partisan politics. Alastair Lichten asks why partisan religious beliefs are treated so differently.*

Sections [406 and 407](#) of the Education Act 1996 (applying to... [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Faith Schools](#), [Politics](#)

## **New guidance on the right to withdraw from RE in Wales – response**

Posted: Wed, 06 Jun 2018 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

*New guidance on managing parents' right to withdraw their children from religious education in Wales is largely common sense, says Alastair Lichten. But it downplays the confessional nature of some RE teaching.*

The right to withdraw from RE is a difficult area... [Read More »](#)

Tags: [Religious education](#), [Wales](#)

## **Faith schools: why reducing the harm isn't enough**

Posted: Mon, 23 Apr 2018 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

*We can mitigate the harm caused by faith schools in plenty of ways. But after the launch of the No More Faith Schools campaign, Alastair Lichten says the long-term battle is over the fact faith*

groups run schools at all.

I spent a lot of Friday reading though... [Read More »](#)

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## [We can't build a shared society around segregated schools](#)

Posted: Thu, 15 Mar 2018 by [Alastair Lichten](#)

*Our education and schools officer examines the education proposals in the Government's new integration strategy, arguing they should lead to a wider discussion of children's rights and facing up to the religious segregation rife in education.*

When we talk about... [Read More »](#)

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