

Thousands of children are languishing in unregistered faith schools.

These schools prioritise fundamentalist religion over the education and welfare of children.

The scandal of unregistered schools must be addressed.

Some religious institutions operate schools which are not registered with the Department for Education, despite this being a legal requirement.

Schools are left unregistered to avoid regulations and inspections, so they can teach a very narrow, religion-based curriculum without oversight. **This severely limits children's future options**, as children leave these schools with very poor literacy, no formal qualifications and no skills or experience for life in modern Britain.

The lack of scrutiny also presents major safeguarding concerns. Children have been taught in unsafe conditions and subjected to physical punishment in these schools. The curriculum may also teach extremist, regressive and discriminatory dogma.

In 2019, Ofsted [estimated](#) as many as 6,000 children were being educated in unregistered settings. But the number could be even higher. Approximately 86,300 children and young people were electively home educated nationally during the year 2019/20. There is little regulation of home education, so many of these children could in fact be attending an unregistered school.

Some unregistered schools exploit loopholes in the law to avoid registration and operate at the margins of the law as an "out of school educational setting". Although many out of school settings, including tuition centres and supplementary schools, provide an excellence service, a minority put children's welfare at risk.

We are working to end the harms caused by unregistered schools by campaigning for greater powers for Ofsted tackle these settings, the elimination of loopholes to force more schools to register, and improved regulation of elective home education.

Take action!

1. Suspect an unregistered school? Report it!

Unregistered schools are illegal and pose a serious threat to children's wellbeing. If you think you know of a possible unregistered school, please report it to the schools inspectorate Ofsted.

If you are aware of children in imminent danger, please call 999 and inform the police.

- [Contact Ofsted](#)

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.

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Posted: Wed, 24 Jan 2024 16:47

NSS says guidance should make clear that unregistered schools are "never suitable" and "never safe".

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