

Religiosity inspections: the case against faith-based reviews of state schools

[Download the report >>>](#)

Faith schools in England and Wales are inspected by their sponsoring religious group to ensure that their worship, religious education and overall approach promotes a rigorous religious ethos. These publicly funded 'religiosity inspections' are required by law in England and in Wales through Sections 48 and 50 of the Education Act 2005.

This report from the National Secular Society provides the key arguments for removing faith-based inspections. It features numerous case studies, including accounts from leaders within faith schools, and includes an in depth qualitative and quantitative analysis of 40 SIAMS reports.

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

[Click to tweet](#)

[Please read and share this report into the costs and impact of faith-based inspections of state schools. Help end this inappropriate platform for faith groups to push their agendas.](#)

[Click to tweet](#)

- [Read the report](#)

[Read More](#)

- [Read our briefing](#)

[Read More](#)

The report finds that religiosity inspections:

- **Cost the taxpayer over three-quarters of a million pounds a year.**
Inspections cost taxpayers £760,000 a year on average over the eight academic years examined. Each grant is the equivalent of up to 14% of the cost of an typical Ofsted inspection.
- **Conflate religiosity with virtue, presenting widely shared moral values as being rooted in specific religions.**
83% of the reports we examined framed widely held values as uniquely or fundamentally "Christian". 63% of the reports urged schools to be more explicit or exclusive about this.
- **Promote religious organisations' theological approach to religious education and collective worship.**
50% of the reports we examined explicitly promote the Church of England's own evangelical resource. 58% of the reports conflated successful RE with promoting or eliciting Christian

viewpoints.

- **Are an unnecessary burden for schools.**

Testimonies in the report show that religiosity inspections can place a significant stress on teachers and senior leaders in faith schools. In addition to preparing for the usual inspections, they must prepare for an additional regime with often conflicting standards and aims.

Recommendations

The report recommends key steps towards an equal inspections regime in all schools.

1. Repeal Sections 48 and 50 of the Education Act.
2. Extend Ofsted or Estyn inspections to cover religious education in all schools.
3. Stop public funding of religiosity inspections.
4. Issue guidance on third party inspections of state schools.
5. Strengthen Ofsted and Estyn inspections to cover religious education and ensure that all schools are promoting an appropriate and inclusive ethos.

Take action

* Required Field

Let us know if you support this campaign

Messages of support help inform our future work on this issue.

Name*:

Email*:

Your message of support:

Please leave a message of support for the campaign. Responses may be used in accordance with our supporter comment policy.

Postcode:

Would you like to join our newsletter to be kept up to date with this and our other campaigns?

Yes

Do you want to receive local updates based on your postcode?

Yes

Count me in

Write to your MP

Share the report and ask your MP to end religiosity inspection in England.

Enter Postcode: _____

Find my MP

Write to your MS

Share the report and ask your MS to end religiosity inspection in Wales.

Enter Postcode: _____

Find my MS

If you have experienced some of the problems addressed in this report that you would like to share, or are seeking advice on Section 48/50 inspections, then please [get in touch](#).

More information

- [NSS renews call to end faith schools' 'religiosity inspections'](#)
- [NSS calls for end to state funded 'religiosity inspections' in schools](#)
- [Let Ofsted inspect religious education in faith schools](#)