

Girl Guides to introduce new secular Promise for all

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The National Secular Society has welcomed news that The Guide Association is to update its Promise to emphasise that guiding is open to all girls.

The updated Promise will ask members to 'be true to myself and develop my beliefs'. This will replace the previous phrase 'to love my God'. The change was made after a public consultation involving nearly 44,000 people of all ages from inside and outside guiding showed that different words were needed to include all girls, of all faiths and none, more explicitly in the Promise.

The National Secular Society has long argued that a secular Promise, without reference to religion, is the most appropriate way forward.

Stephen Evans, campaigns manager at the National Secular Society, said: "The introduction of one secular Promise for all is a hugely positive and welcome development.

"By omitting any explicit mention of God or religion Girlguiding has grasped the opportunity to make itself truly inclusive and relevant to the reality of 21st century Britain. The new wording now provides a meaningful Promise for all guides and potential leaders, whatever their religious beliefs – and sends a clear signal that the organisation is equally welcoming to all girls.

"We now hope the Scouts will take a lead from the Girl Guides and similarly open itself up to non-believers."

Gill Slocombe, Chief Guide, said: "Girlguiding believes passionately that girls need a space to explore their values and build the confidence to be true to themselves. Guiding has always been somewhere that all girls can develop their beliefs and moral framework, both inside and outside the context of a formal religion.

"However, we knew that some people found our Promise confusing on this point and that it discouraged some girls and volunteers from joining us. We hope that the new wording will help us reach out to girls and women who might not have considered guiding before – so that even more girls can benefit from everything guiding can offer.

"Guiding believes in having one Promise that is a clear statement of our core values for all our members to commit to. We hope that our new Promise will allow all girls – of all faiths and none – to understand and feel proud of their commitment."

The new Promise reads:

I promise that I will do my best:
To be true to myself and develop my beliefs,
To serve the Queen and my community,
To help other people
and

To keep the (Brownie) Guide law.

[The National Secular Society's response to the Girl Guides' consultation can be read here](#)

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