

Creationism blocked in Scottish science classes

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The Scottish education minister has stated that creationism should not be taught in science classes in publicly-funded Scottish schools.

Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages, said that creationism is not a "scientific principle" and "it should therefore not be taught as part of science lessons."

The announcement came after a statement by the Holyrood Parliament, following a petition and campaign by the Scottish Secular Society urging the Scottish Government to tackle the issue, after cases emerged of Christian fundamentalists handing out creationist literature in schools.

NSS spokesperson for Scotland Alastair McBay commented: "Scottish secularists have done a superb job in tackling this issue in the face of predictable opposition from religious interests. The degree of infiltration in Scotland's schools, particularly non-denominational ones, by Christian fundamentalists, means that we must all remain vigilant as these people take no notice of Government edicts and will continue to teach such nonsense under a flag of freedom of religious expression. Creationist beliefs may be a topic for religious education classes, but they have no place in the science classroom."

The Scottish Secular Society's petition had called on the Scottish Parliament to "urge the Scottish Government to issue official guidance to bar the presentation in Scottish publicly funded schools of separate creation and of Young Earth doctrines as viable alternatives to the established science of evolution, common descent, and deep time."

The Scottish Government had previously not explicitly stated that the teaching of creationism as a valid scientific theory was prohibited, but has now done so.

The Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland said that the debate was "an extraordinary waste of parliamentary time."

In January 2015, a [motion was put forward](#) by two MSPs which called for Scottish children to be made "aware" of creationist teaching. One of the supporters of the motion, John Mason MSP, tweeted: "I think science is better sticking to what exists. How and why things came about is probably better not included in science."

In England, the Department for Education has previously stated that teaching creationism as scientific fact is "wrong" and that schools are not permitted to teach creationism instead of valid and thoroughly evidenced scientific theories.

The DfE says it will not accept any academy or free school proposal which plans to teach creationism in the science curriculum.

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