

Half of independent faith schools failing

Posted: Sat, 25th Nov 2017

Almost half of independent faith schools have been rated as 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' since Ofsted introduced new standards for inspections.

According to [Ofsted](#), who called the changes "stark", 49% of faith schools (including 33% of Christian schools, 53% of Jewish schools and 58% of Muslim schools) were rated below 'good', compared to 25% of non-faith independent schools, in their latest inspection.

Alastair Lichten, the NSS's education and schools campaigner, said: "We've long called on these faith schools to be held to the same standards as other schools. Now they are, and are finding it difficult."

In 2014 the NSS [supported the introduction of](#) new independent school standards, which reinforcing principles of equality and fundamental values. Independent schools are now required to [promote](#) the "fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs".

Independent faith schools judged below 'good' are around three times more likely than non-faith schools in the same position to not meet requirements for these values through their "written policies" or the "spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils" and around five times more likely to fail in terms of the "quality of teaching". 69% of failing faith schools were found to have deficiencies in leadership in and management, compared to 55% of similar non-faith schools.

Much of the rise in failing schools was down to Ofsted taking over inspection of Christian and Muslim schools previously inspected by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate (BSI), 28 out of 39 which were found to be below 'good'. The BSI [ceased operations](#) in October 2015 after the National Secular Society and others had warned that their inspectors' links to extremist views were [inappropriate](#).

Mr Lichten said the changes "vindicated" criticisms of the BSI and showed faith schools shouldn't be allowed to "mark their own homework", saying: "Whatever type of school they attend, every young person deserves their right to education protected, they deserve the right to be prepared for life in modern Britain, rather than siloed into inward looking groups, preparing them only for life within a religious community."

The number of independent faith schools inspected by Ofsted has risen in recent years, possibly due to previously (illegally) [unregistered schools](#) becoming registered. In September the NSS [reported](#) that Ofsted had repeatedly failed dozens of independent faith schools, which were continuing to operate.

[*Discuss this article on Facebook.*](#)

While you're here

Our news and opinion content is an important part of our campaigns work. Many articles involve a lot of research by our campaigns team. If you value this output, please consider supporting us today.

- [Support us from just £1 a month](#)

- [Share on What's App](#)
- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Share on Email](#)
- [Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

Tags: [Faith schools](#)

Related Campaigns

-

[**No more faith schools**](#)

We need inclusive schools free from religious discrimination, privilege or control.

[Read More](#)

Related Articles

[**Councils say faith schools disadvantaging looked after children**](#)

Evidence increasing that faith schools disadvantage those with greatest need. [Read More »](#)

[**Don't merge secular school into faith school, NSS urges council**](#)

The National Secular Society has urged Southwark Council to reject plans to merge a nonreligious school into a faith... [Read More »](#)

[**Faith school banning parts of geography lessons, Ofsted finds**](#)

Ofsted finds faith school prohibiting parts of lessons it judges incompatible with its religious beliefs.

[Read More »](#)

Remove religious barriers to inclusion in NI schools, paper says

"Little change" in school religious composition for over two decades, research finds [Read More »](#)

Peer calls for more secular democracy in RE debate

Lord Warner challenges prayers in parliament and schools, bishops' bench, and faith schools.

[Read More »](#)