

Most Brits don't consider religious studies important, poll finds

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A majority of adults in Britain don't consider it important to teach religious studies at secondary school, according to a new poll.

[A survey by YouGov](#) has found that 55% of Brits think teaching RS is either "not very important" (31%) or "not at all important" (24%).

Just 12% regarded it as "very important", while 27% said it was "quite important".

The poll investigated public attitudes to 18 subjects and only three – drama, classics and Latin – gained a lower combined score in these two categories.

Meanwhile 63% thought citizenship education was either very (24%) or quite (39%) important.

The data comes amid ongoing debate over the future of education on religion and belief – particularly in Wales, where the government is planning significant reform.

The National Secular Society, which argues that education in this area should be [more pluralistic and objective](#), said the numbers should be "a wake-up call".

NSS comment

NSS head of education Alastair Lichten said: "These findings are just the latest sign that religion and belief education needs significant reform to gain public confidence.

"Policy makers should be prepared to confront the dominance of religious interests and instead adopt an approach where a broader range of worldviews is critically considered."

Current moves towards reform

- Earlier this year the Welsh government [published legislation to replace religious education \(RE\) with a more pluralistic subject](#), called Religion, Values and Ethics.
- In 2018 a [report from the Commission on Religious Education](#) recommended replacing RE with 'Religion and Worldviews' and introducing a national entitlement to it in England.

Further notes

- The YouGov poll didn't distinguish between RE and RS.
- YouGov surveyed 1,645 adults between 21 and 23 November 2020. The poll was highlighted in the November edition of the [Counting Religion in Britain](#) blog.

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