

Challenge religious stigmatising of LGBT people, NSS tells Welsh government

Posted: Mon, 20th Sep 2021

The National Secular Society has called on the Welsh government to challenge religious homophobia in education, healthcare and charities.

The Welsh government is [consulting](#) on its LGBTQ+ action plan, which aims to tackle inequalities and discrimination experienced by LGBT+ people.

In its [response](#), the NSS highlighted barriers posed by religious organisations in achieving LGBT+ equality in Wales. It said the action plan needs "greater focus on the role on religion in anti-LGBT+ hate and discrimination".

LGBT+ inclusive education

The NSS welcomed the government's proposal to deliver "LGBTQ+ inclusive RSE for all". But it "strongly recommended" the government revisit recent [curriculum reforms](#) that still permit faith schools to teach relationships and sex education (RSE) from a faith-based perspective. This means children at some faith schools will continue to be taught same-sex relationships are wrong, the NSS said. It highlighted its 2018 [findings](#) that all 12 state-funded secondary schools in Wales with an RSE policy were teaching the subject within the tenets of Catholicism or the Church in Wales.

'Conversion therapy'

The NSS welcomed the government's commitment to tackle so-called '[conversion therapy](#)'. It recommended legislation against forced conversion therapy, and said those harmed by the procedure should be able to seek redress. It said it should be a criminal offence for any healthcare professional to practice or support conversion therapy, and that improved education about the harms of the procedure was necessary in the healthcare sector.

Charities

The NSS said organisations that actively promote anti-LGBT+ ideology should be prevented from registering as charities. It recommended removing '[the advancement of religion](#)' from the list of recognised charitable purposes, because it enables charities to promote homophobia as part of their religious ideology. It gave examples of a Cardiff-based Islamic charity with a [video](#) on its YouTube account about how to 'prevent sodomy' via Islamic modesty codes, and a Christian charity, also in Cardiff, that [says](#) anything that's not part of "God's good plan" for marriage should be "put to death" in a Sunday School resource.

Employment

The NSS recommended a review of [gaps in the Equality Act 2010](#) that allow religious organisations to discriminate against potential employees on the basis of sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion or belief. It warned this may be over-used to build an "exclusively heterosexual workforce".

NSS comment

NSS head of policy and research Megan Manson said: "We welcome the Welsh government's aims to tackle inequalities experienced by LGBT+ people.

"However, the government has shied away from challenging the religious fundamentalism that poses some of the greatest barriers to LGBT+ equality.

"Without taking this on, particularly in schools and charities, we will sadly continue to see anti-LGBT+ propaganda being promoted in the name of religion."

The consultation closes on 22 October.

Image: Pride Cymru 2016, Cardiff / Welsh Parliament (cropped), via [Wikimedia Commons](#).

[Discuss 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: [Charity](#), [Faith schools](#), [LGBT](#)

Related Campaigns

-

[LGBT rights](#)

Religion is no excuse for homophobia.

[Read More](#)

-

[Reform charity laws](#)

All charities, religious or not, should be held to the same standards.

[Read More](#)

-

No more faith schools

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

[Read More](#)

Related Articles

NSS: investigate charity accused of exorcism and conversion therapy

Christian charity allegedly told gay teenager he was possessed by a demon and subjected him to four years of exorcism. [Read More »](#)

Parents object to Catholic school lobbying on sex education

Parents and teachers call lobbying "scandalous", "heavy-handed". [Read More »](#)

NSS tells Scottish Government to keep religious dogma out of sex ed

NSS: provisions in new guidance on sex education leaves door open for religious ideology, risking children's wellbeing. [Read More »](#)

NSS: Don't let NI faith schools fail pupils on reproductive rights

Requirement for RSE to reflect "religious principles" conflicts with neutral lessons on reproductive health in NI schools, NSS says. [Read More »](#)

NSS calls for action on religious homophobia in report to UN

The National Secular Society has highlighted the role of religion in discrimination against LGBT people in a [submission... Read More »](#)