

IslamicRSE – Official Statement

IslamicRSE's Official Statement, 25 March 2019

IslamicRSE believes the Government's draft RE and RSE Regulations are not fit for purpose and are flawed due to a number of key reasons, outlined below. Therefore IslamicRSE does not support the Regulations concerning the RE and RSE subjects in England.

1. Parental rights violated

It is the right of parents to educate their children according to their own wishes, as evidenced by the five legal documents, mentioned below. However, the **draft Regulations breach the protection of religious rights and severely restrict parental rights, making it practically impossible for parents to have their children educated in-line with their beliefs.** This violates parents' human rights.

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948: "**Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children**" (Article 26(3)).
- European Convention on Human Rights 1953: "**In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions**" (Article 2, Protocol 1).
- Education Act 1996: "**Pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents**" (Section 9).
- Human Rights Act 1998: "**In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions**" (Schedule 1, Part II, Article 2).
- Equality Act 2010 states that religious beliefs are a Protected Characteristic.

2. Consultation responses ignored

The Regulations are supposed to be based on a government consultation, the respondents of which were mostly parents. However, the **Regulations completely ignored the results of the consultation.**

- Almost two-thirds (64%) stated that Relationships & Sex Education (at secondary level) was not age-appropriate and over half (58%) stated the same concerning Relationships Education (at primary level).
- A large proportion of respondents were critical of the emphasis placed on alternative lifestyles and a lack of emphasis on traditional heterosexual marriage.
- Over half (58%) did not agree to taking away parents' automatic right to withdraw their children from sex education.
- Based on the figures provided, over twice as many respondents were against the teaching of LGBT issues when compared to those in favour and it was acknowledged that teaching LGBT issues was highly contentious.

3. Risk of children suffering serious mental, emotional and psychological harm

According to the Regulations, all children aged 4 to 7 will be taught that they can choose their gender. During this tender age, a child develops her or his "gender stability", identifying as either female or male, in accordance with their biological sex. Any proactive interference (not based on sound scientific research) will affect the natural developmental process of a child and could cause her or him to suffer serious mental, emotional and psychological problems.

4. Additional points

We have not been contacted directly or indirectly by those involved in the Parkfield protests. Also at no point have we initiated any contact with those involved with any protests, including Parkfield, nor do we intend to do so in the future. We advise parents to work collaboratively with schools to ensure their child(ren)'s wellbeing and innocence are protected. We do not have any official letters for parents, however we do advise them to exercise their parental right to withdraw their child(ren), should they wish to do so. All of our official documents carry our organisation's details.