

29th March

The Department for Education has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (133480):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether (a) his Department and (b) other public bodies have commissioned research into the practices of schools in relation to their statutory obligation to provide religious education since 2010; and if he will make a statement. (133480)

Tabled on: 20 March 2018

This question was grouped with the following question(s) for answer:

1. To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number and proportion of (a) maintained primary schools, (b) maintained secondary schools, (c) academies, (d) free schools and (e) sixth form colleges in England which do not fulfill the legal requirement to provide religious education in the school curriculum. (133477)

Tabled on: 20 March 2018

2. To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools have been reported to his Department for non-compliance with the statutory obligation to provide religious education in each academic years since 2010-11. (133483)

Tabled on: 20 March 2018

3. To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his policy is in the event of a school being found to be in breach of its statutory obligation to provide religious education in the curriculum; and if he will make a statement. (133484)

Tabled on: 20 March 2018

Answer:

Nick Gibb:

Religious Education (RE) is compulsory for all state-funded schools, including academies and free schools, at all key stages. The Department investigates complaints made about schools not fulfilling their statutory duties in respect of RE.

The Department does not gather data on schools' level of compliance with the requirement. One formal complaint was made to the Department about a school's non-compliance with its statutory duties in respect of RE in the period since 2010-2011.

Faith schools are required to arrange a separate inspection of denominational religious education and collective worship, leading to published reports. Ofsted does not inspect

individual curriculum subjects, but is required to report on whether the curriculum offered by the school is broad and balanced and promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

If an individual is concerned that a school is not meeting its duty to provide religious education they should follow that school's complaint procedure in the first instance. If the complaint is not resolved, then the issue can be escalated to the Department's School Complaints Unit for maintained schools, or the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, free schools, university technical colleges or studio schools. Information about complaint procedures for schools can be found at www.gov.uk/complain-about-school.

My Rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education has a range of powers to ensure schools comply with their statutory obligations. The powers used will depend on the nature of the statutory duty in question and the potential impact of any failure to comply. These powers include a direction under section 497 of the Education Act 1996, a performance and standards warning notice under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and a referral to Ofsted for an inspection. Where academies are subject to the same statutory duties as maintained schools, the Secretary of State has powers to enforce compliance via the terms of the funding agreement.

The answer was submitted on 26 Mar 2018 at 16:55.

The Department for Education has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (133477):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number and proportion of (a) maintained primary schools, (b) maintained secondary schools, (c) academies, (d) free schools and (e) sixth form colleges in England which do not fulfill the legal requirement to provide religious education in the school curriculum. (133477)

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Answer:

Nick Gibb:

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My Rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education has a range of powers to ensure schools comply with their statutory obligations. The powers used will depend on the nature of the statutory duty in question and the potential impact of any failure to comply. These powers include a direction under section 497 of the Education Act 1996, a performance and standards warning notice under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and a referral to Ofsted for an inspection. Where academies are subject to the same statutory duties as maintained schools, the Secretary of State has powers to enforce compliance via the terms of the funding agreement.

The answer was submitted on 26 Mar 2018 at 16:55.

The Department for Education has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (133819):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of whether local Standing Advisory Committees for RE are adequately resourced to discharge their statutory responsibilities; and if he will make a statement. (133819)

Tabled on: 21 March 2018

Answer:**Nick Gibb:**

The Government is continuing to provide local authorities with funding for Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) through the Central School Service Block from 2018/19 onwards. Local authorities are expected to ensure that SACREs are funded adequately to perform their duties.

SACREs continue to play an important role in supporting schools to teach high-quality religious education.

The answer was submitted on 26 Mar 2018 at 17:03.

The Department for Education has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (133816):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what powers he has to require or encourage (a) academies, (b) maintained community schools and (c) schools with a religious character to fulfill the statutory obligation to provide religious education in the curriculum. (133816)

Tabled on: 21 March 2018

Answer:**Nick Gibb:**

Legislation in funding agreements require all state funded schools to deliver religious education.

If an individual is concerned that a school is not meeting its duty to provide religious education they should follow that school's complaints procedure in the first instance. If the complaint is not resolved, then the issue can be escalated to the Department's School Complaints Unit for maintained schools, or the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, free schools, university technical colleges or studio schools. Information about complaint procedures for schools can be found at www.gov.uk/complain-about-school.

My Rt Hon. friend The Secretary of State has a range of powers to ensure schools comply with their statutory obligations. The exact powers used will depend on the

nature of the statutory duty in question and the potential impact of any failure to comply. The powers used could include a direction under section 497 of the Education Act 1996, a performance and standards warning notice under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and a referral to Ofsted for an inspection. Where academies are subject to the same statutory duties as maintained schools, the Secretary of State has powers to enforce compliance via the terms of the funding agreement.

The answer was submitted on 26 Mar 2018 at 17:08.

NOTE:

All the written questions tabled in the current Session of Parliament (and where relevant, the answers) can be viewed here:
<https://members.wqa.parliament.uk>