

Faith schools may lose the right to teach religion from their own perspective and be forced to tell pupils more about other faiths

- **Report says RE should be added to national curriculum**
- **Fears that subject has been marginalised and is being badly taught**
- **Faith schools would be legally required to teach standard syllabus**
- **Currently RE is a compulsory subject but with no agreed content**

By [Chris Pleasance](#)



Faith schools could be banned from teaching their own denomination if proposals to add RE to the national curriculum go ahead

Faith schools could lose the right to teach their own belief and instead have to give more weight to other religions.

A report by the Religious Education Council for England and Wales says RE has become marginalised and should be added to the national curriculum.

But that would make it a legal requirement for all school to teach the same syllabus, regardless of their faiths.

The report, a three year review of religious teaching in schools, could form the basis of a new curriculum when it is released next week.

Chairman John Keast has admitted that it would be difficult for faith schools to teach their own denomination, but said one solution could involve optional modules for students.

Speaking to The Times, he said: 'These are quite important and difficult issues to overcome. I don't personally think they are insuperable.'

'I think you could get sufficient agreement on a national body of religious education knowledge and skills and understanding that everyone should know for the modern world.'

Since 1944 RE has been given a special status as a compulsory subject but which has no specified content.

Instead the subject matter is agreed by a committee of faith leaders, teachers and politicians agree the topics covered in each area.



Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, is criticised in a report on religious education for scrapping bursaries for trainee teachers and not putting RE on the English Baccalaureate

Faith schools make separate arrangements through their diocese while academies can also decide their own content.

The report will also accuse Micheal Gove of damaging RE by scrapping bursaries for trainee teachers, refusing to add the subject to the English Baccalaureate and rejecting calls to update teaching materials.

An Ofsted report said earlier this month also said more than half of England's schools were failing pupils on religious education.

The report says there is a lack of focus on the subject and that six out of ten schools are not realising the subject's full potential in lessons, highlighting low standards, weak teaching and confusion about the purpose of the course.

The RE council also had to raise £100,000 to fund its own curriculum guidance after the Government turn down its bid for funding.

A Department of Education spokesperson said: 'Religious education remains a compulsory part of the school curriculum and the numbers studying the full course GCSE and A levels in the subject has increased in the past year.'