



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

Faith Schools: Admissions

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [3504] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has conducted a further assessment of the effectiveness of the continued existence of the 50 per cent rule for schools following the 2016 Government consultation, Schools that Work for Everyone, which recommended the removal of the rule.

Robin Walker: The government strongly supports schools with a religious character and recognises that they are often high performing and popular with parents. We recognise that some groups, including the Catholic Church, feel unable to participate in the free schools programme because of the 50% cap on faith admissions.

The department is committed to ensuring that, once all schools are in academy trusts, all providers of schools with a religious character maintain their ability to open new schools.

The 50% cap will remain under review and the department is open to discussion with groups who provide schools with a religious character, including the Catholic Church.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-17/3504>

The report of the consultation referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706227/Final_Report_-_Ipsos_MORI_analysis_of_Schools_that_work_for_everyone.pdf

and the Government response at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706243/Schools_that_work_for_everyone-Government_consultation_response.pdf

Schools: Bullying

Sarah Owen (Labour) 3744] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to tackle anti-Sikh bullying in schools.

Robin Walker: The government has sent a clear message that bullying should never be tolerated, and the department is committed to supporting schools to tackle it.

The department is providing over £2 million of funding, between 10 August 2021 and 31 March 2023, to five anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying. This includes projects targeting bullying of groups who share protected characteristics, including race and faith and belief, such as those who are victims of hate related bullying.

All schools should set clear, reasonable and proportionate expectations of pupil behaviour in line with the department's guidance on behaviour and discipline in schools. It is for individual schools to develop their own best practice for managing behaviour in their school.

We are also making sure that all children in England will learn about respectful relationships, in person and online, as part of mandatory relationships, sex and health education. This includes content on the different types of bullying, the impact it has, the responsibility of bystanders, and how to get help.

The department continues to publish information, guidance and support for teachers and school leaders on how to challenge radical views, including racist and discriminatory beliefs, on Educate Against Hate. We also provide advice for schools, which outlines schools' responsibilities. This advice makes clear that schools should make appropriate provision for a bullied child's social, emotional and mental health needs.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-17/3744>

Educate Against Hate, referred to above, can be accessed at
<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

Islamophobia

Sarah Owen (Labour) [3745] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the University of Birmingham's The Dinner Table Prejudice report, published in January 2022, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the rise in Islamophobia cited in that report; and what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on tackling Islamophobia.

Kemi Badenoch: We live in an increasingly tolerant society and prejudice towards Muslims is unacceptable. Muslims in our country should be able to practice their faith in freedom. We have some of the strongest legislation in the world to tackle hate crime and, where groups incite racial hatred or are engaged in racially or religiously motivated criminal activity, we would expect them to be prosecuted. We also have funded Tell MAMA with over £4m between 2017 and 2022 to monitor anti-Muslim hate crimes and support victims.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-17/3745>

The report referred to above can be read at
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/documents/college-artslaw/ptr/90172-univ73-islamophobia-in-the-uk-report-final.pdf>

House of Lords Written Answer

Hate Crime: Criminal Records

Lord Strathcarron (Conservative) [HL178] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to delete records for those accused of non-crime hate incidents.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government recognises the concern surrounding the recording of non-crime hate incidents (NCHIs). We also note the

Court of Appeal judgment in the Harry Miller v College of Policing case that was handed down on 20 December 2021. The Court found that the recording of NCHIs is lawful provided that there are robust safeguards in place so that the interference with freedom of expression is proportionate.

Accordingly, the Government included provisions in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill - which received Royal Assent on 28 April 2022 - to ensure that the recording of NCHIs is governed by a Code of Practice that is subject to Parliamentary approval.

The content of the Code will be drafted in due course, and will make the processes surrounding the recording of NCHI data more transparent and subject to stronger safeguards, including on retention. In the short term, we have no plans to ask police forces to review or delete existing personal NCHI data that they may have on record. To do so would be a disproportionately costly, time consuming and resource-intensive process that is not warranted at this stage.

The College of Policing is also reflecting on the Court of Appeal's judgment carefully and make any changes that are necessary to its existing guidance which will remain in force in the interim period before the new Code enters into effect.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-11/hl178>

The judgement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Miller-v-College-of-Policing-judgment-201221.pdf>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Israel: Embassies

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [5389] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make it her policy to relocate the British Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

Amanda Milling: The British Embassy to Israel is based in Tel Aviv and we have no plans to move it.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-19/5389>

United Nations

Ninety Per Cent of War-Time Casualties Are Civilians, Speakers Stress, Pressing Security Council to Fulfil Responsibility, Protect Innocent People in Conflicts

... **Ramesh Rajasingham, Director of Coordination of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs**, said the Secretary-General's report (document S/2022/381) outlines the grim reality that civilians bear the brunt of suffering in armed conflict. Conflict continued to cause widespread civilian death last year, notably in densely populated areas, where civilians accounted for 90 per cent of the casualties when explosive weapons were used, compared to 10 per cent in other areas.

Robert Mardini, Director-General, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), ... pointed to deliberate attacks on civilians and civilian objects, blatant politicization of humanitarian action and States ...

Highlighting issues of particular concern, he described the appalling human cost of war in

cities, especially when explosive weapons with wide area effects are used: countless people killed, homes destroyed, hospitals faced with multiple and complex injuries, quickly overwhelming emergency rooms and survivors left with lifelong disabilities. ...

David Miliband, President of the International Rescue Committee, reported that last year his organization's 30,000 staff and volunteers served more than 35 million civilians in 200 field sites in conflict zones around the world. ... Despite countless Council resolutions, civilians account for up to 87 per cent of the casualties during war. Furthermore, a record 100 million people have now been forced to flee their homes by conflict and disaster. ...

Linda Thomas-Greenfield (United States), Council President for May, spoke in her national capacity, spotlighting the downward spiral created by the frequent confluence of killings, forced displacement and lack of humanitarian access. Ceaseless fighting severely limits such access, and the killings of humanitarian workers make it harder to deliver aid. This lack of aid means civilians are more likely to remain displaced. ...

James Paul Roscoe (United Kingdom) said 2022 has been another devastating year for civilians in conflict ... Warring parties are increasingly treating the rules of international law with contempt. States need to do more on prevention by mainstreaming civilian protections into domestic law and operations, including by enacting appropriate legislative and institutional arrangements to comprehensively address violations and abuses and hold perpetrators to account. ...

Geraldine Byrne Nason (Ireland) ... [said] "It is clear that in conflicts such as Ukraine, Ethiopia, Syria, Yemen and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, this Council has failed to deliver the political protection we can collectively offer," ...

Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani (Qatar) ... [expressed] regret that 20 reporters were killed in conflict in 2021, she denounced Israel's killing of Shireen Abu Akleh, an Al Jazeera correspondent, and the wounding of a producer, emphasizing that "these people were wearing clear markings identifying them as members of the press". The Council must ensure that an immediate, transparent and impartial investigation is carried out and that accountability is ensured. ...

Majid Takht Ravanchi (Iran) ... [said] the Occupied Palestinian Territory has the highest number of injured health-care workers in the world ...

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine, said that the entire edifice of international humanitarian law was built on the primary objective of protecting those who do not take part — or have ceased taking part — in hostilities. Yet, these are the primary victims of the Israeli occupation. Every day is a stark reminder that the Palestinian people are left defenceless in the face of repeated attacks by Israeli occupation forces and settlers, he stressed, adding that "nowhere are our people safe". Recalling the recent killing of Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, he noted that she "dedicated her life to giving voice to victims until she became one herself". Her killing is, unfortunately, an integral part of the Palestinian story — of always being under threat, but also of resilience — and this insecurity is a direct result of full-scale Israeli impunity. Council resolution 904 (1994) was never implemented, and he stressed that calls to uphold international law and the Charter of the United Nations cannot coexist with a refusal to hold Israel accountable. ...

Noa Furman (Israel), noting that her country has faced incessant conflict from the moment of its founding, highlighted Israel's commitment to protecting civilians in conflict, beyond its borders. However, those aiming at her country's destruction not only target its civilians, they use their own people as human shields, she said. Hamas has terror tunnels under hospitals and schools, and uses them as weapons storage sites and rocket launchpads, she said, calling that a "double war crime." During the previous year's "Operation Guardian of the Walls", she said, over 4,000 Hamas rockets, fired from residential neighborhoods in Gaza, rained down on Israeli cities. But even while her country was under fire, it worked with the United Nations to facilitate the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza. It was Hamas which targeted the crossing, preventing the aid from reaching the Palestinians in Gaza,

she said, also adding that Hizbullah's terror army is entrenched along her country's northern border. While Israel takes every measure to prevent the deaths of civilians, those who seek the country's destruction do not take any such measures ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2022/sc14904.doc.htm>

Protection of civilians in armed conflict: Report of the Secretary-General [S/2022/381]

<https://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?OpenAgent&DS=S/2022/381&Lang=E>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Online Safety Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

Schools Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156>

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Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes in 7 days**

Independent Review of Social Cohesion and Resilience (closing date 2 June 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-review-of-social-cohesion-and-resilience-call-for-evidence/independent-review-of-social-cohesion-and-resilience-call-for-evidence>

Public Participation at the Scottish Parliament (closing date 30 June 2022)

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/cppp/participation-2022/>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438