

Education (Assemblies) Bill [HL]

RUNNING LIST OF ALL AMENDMENTS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

*Tabled up to and including
11 February 2025*

[Amendments marked ★ are new or have been altered]

Clause 1

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ Clause 1, page 1, line 21, at the beginning insert “Subject to section 71,”

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ Clause 1, page 2, line 2, at end insert –
- “(2A) An assembly under this section must further the education of pupils with a view to promoting the consideration and development of the following spiritual, moral, social and cultural principles –
- (a) love for one’s neighbour as oneself, that is, for every person without regard for their ethnicity, religion or other characteristics;
 - (b) humility, regarding others better than oneself;
 - (c) forgiveness and forbearance in the pursuit of recompense for wrongs committed against oneself, in favour of mercy;
 - (d) reconciliation and peace-making;
 - (e) generosity and service towards others;
 - (f) respect for the worth of other people, for their lives and property;
 - (g) the centrality of interpersonal relationships in the human condition;
 - (h) patience, kindness and gentleness;
 - (i) the importance of being faithful, and of being able to put faith in others;
 - (j) self-control;
 - (k) retaining hope and joyfulness in the face of difficulty;
 - (l) thankfulness and contentment;

- (m) the recognition of good and evil, and a commitment to refusing evil and choosing the good;
- (n) the development of wisdom and judgement as part of the pursuit of maturity, and the importance of learning from the wisdom of the mature;
- (o) truthfulness and sincerity as the foundation of right action;
- (p) the pursuit of justice in one's own dealings, and in society;
- (q) creativity;
- (r) responsible stewardship of natural resources;
- (s) living a fruitful and productive life."

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment pursues greater consistency by elucidating the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education towards which the Bill requires assemblies to be principally directed, "regardless of religion or belief".

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

★ Clause 1, page 2, line 2, at end insert –

- “(2A) For the avoidance of doubt, the assembly provided under this section at –
- (a) a maintained school must comply with the requirements of sections 406 (political indoctrination) and 407 (duty to secure balanced treatment of political issues) of the Education Act 1996;
 - (b) an academy must comply with the requirements of paragraphs 5(c) and 5(d) of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 2014/3283) (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils).”

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment makes clear that in excluding religion and belief from consideration in the pursuit of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, schools must ensure they nevertheless provide a balanced presentation of opposing views and do not promote a partisan viewpoint.

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

★ Clause 1, page 2, line 2, at end insert –

- “(2A) Schools subject to this section must respect the right of parents to ensure the education and teaching in an assembly provided under this section is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.”

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment seeks to ensure that where schools are providing an assembly in the absence of a parental right of withdrawal, they are acting compatibly with the parent's Convention rights, specifically in Article 2, Protocol 1, and therefore that this Bill is Convention compatible.

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ Clause 1, page 2, line 2, leave out “regardless of religion or” and insert “according to humanist”

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment resolves any ambiguity in the requirement that teaching on matters of spirituality, morality and culture is to be “regardless of religion or belief” by making clear the intention that this teaching is to be founded upon, and reflective of, humanist beliefs.

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ Clause 1, page 2, leave out lines 3 to 12

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment removes the prohibition on schools which do not have a religious designation organising acts of worship or religious observance. This will permit these schools to join in significant national events, such as remembrance days, royal weddings, funerals or coronations, or to organise for pupils to attend such events, or to mark events of religious significance, such as Christmas.

The Schedule

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ The Schedule, page 3, line 17, at end insert –
- “(1AB) If the parent of any pupil other than a sixth-form pupil at –
- (a) a school in England which is not designated with a religious character, or
 - (b) an Academy in England which is not designated with a religious character,
- requests that he or she may be wholly or partly excused from attendance at any event principally directed towards furthering spiritual, moral, social and cultural education regardless of religion or belief, organised by or on behalf of a school (whether or not forming part of the curriculum), the pupil shall be so excused until the request is withdrawn.”

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ The Schedule, page 3, line 29, at end insert –
- “(1CA) If a sixth-form pupil at –
- (a) a school in England which is not designated with a religious character, or
 - (b) an Academy in England which is not designated with a religious character,

requests that he or she may be wholly or partly excused from attendance at any event principally directed towards furthering spiritual, moral, social and cultural education regardless of religion or belief, organised by or on behalf of a school (whether or not forming part of the curriculum), the pupil shall be so excused until the request is withdrawn.”

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ The Schedule, page 3, leave out lines 30 to 35

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment addresses concerns about feasibility in the delivery of the requirements of this Bill, for example at small rural primary schools with religious designations, by removing the requirement that could result in these schools having to provide two assemblies every day.

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ The Schedule, page 3, line 35, at end insert –

“(1E) For any pupils who have been withdrawn from attendance at an event principally directed towards furthering spiritual, moral, social and cultural education regardless of religion or belief, organised by or on behalf of a school, the school must provide an act of worship of equal educational worth, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 3 in Schedule 20 of this Act (nature of collective worship in community schools and foundation schools without a religious character).”

Member's explanatory statement

These amendments afford religious pupils at schools without a religious designation the same rights that the Bill affords to non-religious pupils at schools with a religious designation.

LORD JACKSON OF PETERBOROUGH

- ★ The Schedule, page 3, line 35, at end insert –

“(1E) In this section, “equal educational worth” means education –

- (a) providing equal consideration of the meaning of the word “spiritual”;
- (b) providing consideration of the meaning of the word “belief” applied equally to both secular and religious systems of thought;
- (c) providing equal consideration of underpinning reasons why the moral principles advanced are right;
- (d) furthering equal depth of historical understanding of why the moral principles advanced in the assembly have come to be widely held in British culture, and in other cultures influenced by Christianity.”

Member's explanatory statement

This amendment ensures that the meaning of the phrase “of equal education worth” is clear.

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PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS