



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on July 18, 2013

Non-Muslim Student Denied Water During Ramadan

Is the “separation of church and state” being applied too literally? Because some U.K. parents may point out that mosque and state seems to be mixing all the time.

A case in point is 10-year-old schoolboy Luke Blagden, who was denied water on one of the year’s hottest days in deference to Muslim pupils fasting for Ramadan. Writes the [Daily Mail](#):



Many pupils at Charles Dickens Primary School, Portsmouth, Hampshire, are fasting during Ramadan, which means they refrain from taking food or water between sunrise and sunset for around 30 days, depending on the moon....

[The boy’s mother, Kora Blagden, stated,] “Luke said to me he was told he wasn’t allowed to drink in class by his teacher.

The reason being, a child who is fasting had a headache and the teacher said it would be unfair if the other children drank in front of the pupil.”...

“Luke was dehydrated when he got home and drunk three glasses of water straight away.”

The teacher made the ruling on Thursday when temperatures soared to 28C.

Kora Blagden also said that while the students normally have their water bottles on their desks, on the day in question the teacher had confiscated them.

Yet while young Luke was forced to accept an Islamic norm in the name of tolerance, critics point out that the same principle is used to prevent Christian students from expressing their own faith in even the most innocuous ways. An example is six-year-old U.K. schoolboy Eddie Thompson, whose Estfeld Primary in Tickhill prohibited him from wearing a Christian ankle band, even though it was hidden beneath his sock. As the [Daily Mail](#) [wrote](#) in January:

[The boy’s father, Peter Thompson, said,] “He wears the band because he wants to feel that God is always with him.... No one has said a thing about it for all this time [six months] but when one of the teachers spotted it when Eddie had an itchy ankle and was scratching it she took it off him. When I complained about this to the school they were very blunt and said bands like this were banned. I think they’re discriminating against him because he’s a Christian. This is a symbol of his faith.”

While the school claims such bands are forbidden for “health and safety” reasons, Mr. Thompson believes this is just a pretext. As he noted, “I’m particularly angry and upset at the school because during the summer they were actually selling rubber charity bands to raise money. It doesn’t make sense to me that now they say they are banned yet in the summer they were selling them on school



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property,” reports the *Mail*.

And this is not an isolated case. Another occurred in 2007 when a different U.K. school ordered 13-year-old devout Catholic student Samantha Devine to remove an unobtrusive half-inch crucifix and neck chain. Yet, as the *Mail* [wrote](#) at the time, “her furious family yesterday pointed out the school — Robert Napier in Gillingham, Kent — allows Muslim pupils to wear headscarves and Sikh students to come to lessons with turbans and bangles.”

Like Eddie Thompson’s Estfeld Primary, this school maintained its actions were taken for health and safety reasons. But this doesn’t ring true to the Devine family. As the *Mail* also tells us, “Samantha ... claims staff routinely fail to crack down on youngsters wearing non-religious jewellery, including large necklaces and earrings. Her parents are concerned she is being singled out because she is a Christian. The youngster last night vowed to continue wearing her necklace to school — even if it means being expelled. Her stand now threatens to spark similar confrontations in schools up and down the country.”

Yet the forces of tradition seem to be losing these confrontations. British columnist Stephen Glover provided many such [examples](#) in a 2003 op-ed entitled “MARCH OF THE ZEALOTS,” writing:

The Scottish Parliament has this year banned traditional Christmas cards for fear that they might be offensive to people of other religions....

Meanwhile the Red Cross has banned the sale of cards with a religious theme in its charity shops because it does not want to “offend” minority faiths....

In High Wycombe, church officials have been prevented from advertising a Christmas carol service in one of the town’s churches in case it should offend non-Christians....

Up and down the country, schools have stopped putting on nativity plays out of a misplaced consideration for parents of different religions.

There is even a new law ... which may make it illegal to display in offices Christmas cards featuring nativity scenes in case they cause offence to non-Christian workers....

EVEN government ministers who say that they are Christian strive to ensure that their Christmas cards do not carry even a subliminal Christian message.

This year, the card sent out by Tessa Jowell, the Culture Secretary, shows an exotic montage supposed to represent the diversity of British culture.

There is a picture of what may either be a mosque or Brighton Pavilion, and another of two Indian dancers. But there is not the tiniest Christian reference.

This phenomenon isn’t limited to the U.K., either. Just last month, Sonoma State University student Audrey Jarvis [was told](#) to remove a two-inch-long cross on a necklace while working an orientation fair because it might “offend others.” After San Diego teen Kenneth Dominguez brought his Bible to his Gateway East High School and shared his faith with others, he was [suspended](#) by officials in a move even the ACLU called an obvious violation of free speech. And closer to the Bible Belt, Karns Elementary School in Knox County, Tennessee, once [banned](#) students from studying the Bible during recess after a complaint from only one parent.

What accounts for this “war on Christianity,” as some observers call it? Glover says it is the handiwork of secularists who, “whether out of guilt or hatred of country or simple woolly-headedness, want to disown our past and our history.” While they may preach religious relativism, the writer says that they



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often behave as if Christianity must be subordinated to other faiths.

But this is nothing new. Glover was just echoing one of his late and great countrymen, G.K. Chesterton, who wrote in 1906, "There are those who hate Christianity and call their hatred an all-embracing love for all religions."



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