



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on June 27, 2017

U.K. Jewish School Could Be Closed for Not Teaching LGBT Agenda

An Orthodox Jewish girls' school in England may be forced to close because it refuses to teach its young students the government-approved line on LGBT issues.

Vishnitz Girls School, a private school with 212 pupils aged three to eight, has endured three inspections over the past year-and-a-half from the British government's Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Schools (Ofsted). According to [The Independent](#):



While fee-paying schools such as Vishnitz do not operate under the same curriculum as mainstream state schools, they are obliged to meet two separate sets of standards for sex and relationships education laid out by the Department for Education and Ofsted.

Ofsted makes clear that schools are not expected to "promote" ideas about sexual orientation or gender reassignment, but they are expected to "encourage pupils' respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equalities Act."

Gill Robins of Christians in Education [blogged](#) that the first "emergency inspection" occurred in February 2016, supposedly for "safeguarding concerns." Subsequent inspections have found that all Ofsted's concerns but one have been addressed. The latest report says that pupils are "well motivated, have positive attitudes to learning and are confident in thinking for themselves"; teachers are excellent; assessments are properly utilized; students are well-behaved; and the school environment is safe. The report even praises the school for being "clearly focused on teaching pupils to respect everybody, regardless of beliefs and lifestyle."

There's just one problem, as Ofsted sees it: Because of their faith, the school's administrators refuse to teach their young charges about sexual orientation and gender reassignment. "This," inspectors wrote, "restricts pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and does not promote equality of opportunity in ways that take account of differing lifestyles." In short, if the school's orthodoxy conflicts with present-day progressive orthodoxy, the school must jettison its very *raison d'être*.

An Ofsted spokesperson told *The Independent*, "Parents have the right, on behalf of their children, to expect an education that conforms to their religious beliefs and is in compliance with the law."

But what happens when their immutable religious beliefs conflict with the ever-changing law? Parents are paying roughly \$6,600 a year to send their girls to Vishnitz, presumably because they desire to educate them in the Jewish faith and all it entails, including opposition to homosexual behavior and transgenderism. School officials, perhaps fearing eternal consequences more than temporal ones, told inspectors they would not change their policy on such matters.

[Schools Week](#) writes:

According to guidance on regulating independent schools, "schools that do not meet the standards



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must improve so they do meet them, or close.”

If a school found to be failing any of the independent school standards does not improve, the [Department for Education] has the power to take it off the register, making it a criminal offense to remain open.

Those hostile to faith certainly want to see that happen. Jay Harman, an education campaign manager at Humanists UK, told *Schools Week*, “If schools are not willing to meet the required standards and are found to be failing time and time again, proper sanctions must be implemented.”

“The argument used to justify such sanctions,” penned Robins, “is that [sexual orientation and transgenderism] are protected characteristics. So is religious belief, but it’s now been made crystal clear by Ofsted that the Equality Act is actually hierarchical, with sexual orientation and gender reassignment at the apex of the Act. All equalities are equal, but some equalities are more equal than others.”

Ofsted, in the words of Catholic Member of Parliament Sir Edward Leigh, “appears to be guilty of trying to enforce a kind of state-imposed orthodoxy on certain moral and religious questions.” Yet even that isn’t enough to satisfy the militant Left. According to *The Independent*, “LGBT campaigners warned the policy still left ‘loopholes’ for religious schools in that they are allowed some flexibility in their teaching ... ‘in keeping with their faith.’” Undoubtedly they will push for increasingly strict standards that will eventually outlaw the teaching of anything conflicting with the LGBT agenda.

Thus, it is difficult to argue with Robins’ assessment that “there is little chance of the Jewish community being allowed to continue to live in peace, with parents raising and educating their children as they think best.” Indeed, another Jewish school, Bnos Zion of Bobov, has already been investigated for making “no reference to protected characteristics for sexual orientation and gender reassignment,” reports *Schools Week*.

Christian schools that adhere to traditional biblical teachings cannot be far behind. “In 2014 a highly ranked Catholic school in Suffolk drew criticism from government inspectors for allegedly failing to prepare students for modern life in Britain,” notes the [Catholic News Agency](#). “The school filed a formal complaint about the investigation. The school said parents complained that the inspectors asked children as young as ten about same-sex sexual acts and transsexualism.”

With religious belief and sexual orientation both “protected characteristics” under the law, Robins asserts that the government has “just two options — protect the right of individuals to live and raise their children in accordance with their faith, or make a mockery of the Equality Act by closing schools that fail to comply with your LGBT agenda.” Is there any doubt that, absent a major public outcry, the powers that be will choose the latter?



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