



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry of Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice
Suite 771
Europort
Gibraltar

PRESS RELEASE

No: 113/2013

Date: 22nd February 2013

NO CHANGE TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar notes the comments made in a statement by the Secular Humanist Society of Gibraltar on the teaching of Religious Education at our secondary schools. Specifically, the Government and the Department of Education in particular wish to completely disassociate themselves with any comments made in that statement as to the value of Religious Education in our schools.

We categorically confirm that nothing has in fact changed on the approach to and teaching of Religious Education in our schools. Religious Education has been, is at present and will continue to be one of the core subjects taught in our schools. Indeed, the Education (National Curriculum) Regulations 1991 provide that the basic curriculum shall include provisions for religious education for all registered pupils. There are no plans at all to change this.

Although Religious Education is a core subject (in the same way as English and Maths), the practice has been that some students do not take RE in exceptional circumstances on the grounds of conscience or religious beliefs. This practice has existed for many years. Where this has happened, the student was not able to study an alternative GCSE.

Representations were made to the Government by the parent of one of these students that it was unfair that an alternative GCSE should not be offered where these exceptional circumstances arise with the consequence that the student would take one GCSE less than other students. The Government agreed in principle purely on educational grounds to explore the possibility of offering such an alternative subject provided that the key elements of moral and social education which RE covers were also contained in that subject.

This possibility is still being explored and the Government cannot state at this stage whether it will be feasible or viable in practice to provide such an alternative subject to these students.