



CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S

Religion, Worldviews and Public Perception

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About the research

In summer 2021, Culham St Gabriel's Trust, an endowed charitable foundation, commissioned a nationally representative survey of 2000 UK adults through Savanta ComRes to better understand public perception of religious education in state funded schools. In Autumn 2022, the Trust commissioned a second survey focusing specifically on parents of children and young people aged 0-18. A new religion and worldviews approach to the subject was shared with participants of the first survey including some of its aims such as learning about different worldviews, reflecting the diversity of beliefs in our society and fostering mutual understanding. In the second survey some core principles of this new approach were shared including teaching that worldviews are complex, teaching about social and historical contexts of worldviews, teaching about 'big questions' of life and focusing on lived experience of religious and non-religious believers.

Policy implications

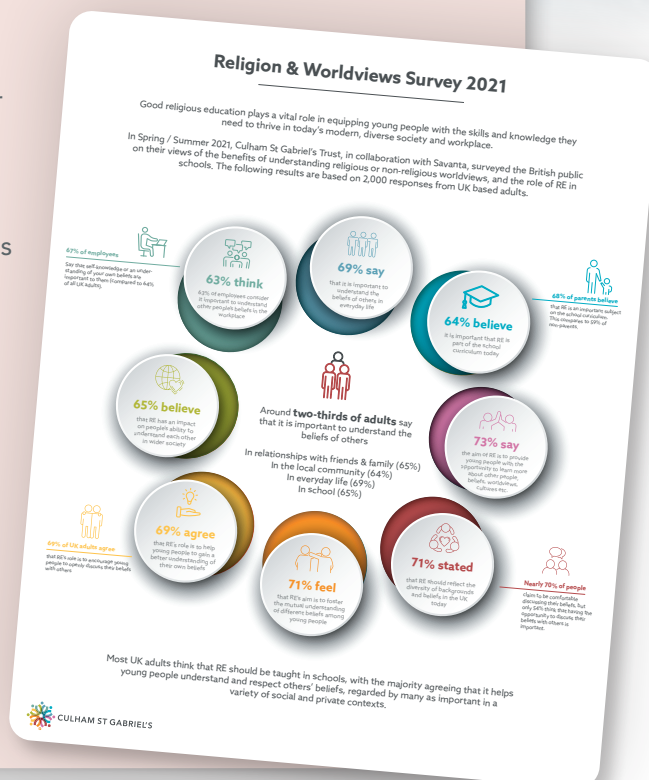
- RE/Religion and Worldviews is an important part of the school curriculum according to multiple stakeholders including parents and employers. It is vital in preparing young people to navigate our multi religious, multi secular society. The Department for Education should ensure that policy makers are aware of the positive public perception of the subject.
- RE/Religion and Worldviews equips children and young people with the skills and knowledge to enter a complex, diverse and globalised work environment according to our survey results. Its place in the curriculum must be secured so that UK employers and employees are confident to contribute meaningfully to public discourse.
- The quality of provision for Religion and Worldviews in schools must be consistent as the subject is the main source of information for children and young people about religious and non-religious worldviews. A National Standard is required to secure this consistency of provision.
- Parents aged 18-34 are particularly concerned about equipping young people with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in today's modern, diverse society and workplace. Engaging with this group is vital. In addition engagement with parents of all ages is required to ensure they are well-informed about how an education in Religion and Worldviews contributes positively to society.

Implement a fully funded National Plan for an Education in Religion and Worldviews including reinstatement of a government bursary for secondary phase beginner teachers and a requirement for at least 12 hours of subject specific content for primary phase beginner teachers.

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Key findings

- Around two-thirds of adult respondents say it is important to understand the beliefs of others in everyday life, in school, in local communities and the workplace.
- 71% of adult respondents say that the subject should reflect the diversity of backgrounds and beliefs in the UK today.
- 63% of employees consider it important to understand other people's beliefs in the workplace.
- 67% of parents who responded regard what their child learns in religion and worldviews as important. This figure rises to 74% for parents aged 18-34. Only 13% stated it was not important.
- 78% of parents who responded agreed that the subject provides their child with an opportunity to learn more about other people, beliefs, worldviews and cultures.
- 69% of parents who responded say that their child mainly accesses information about different religious and non-religious worldviews from school, significantly higher than any other source of information.
- The 2021 survey showed that adults understood the importance of the subject for understanding others, understanding one's own beliefs and developing critical evaluation.
- The 2022 survey showed that some parents are worried about the quality of religion and worldviews teaching in schools citing the lack of specialist teachers.



Further information

www.cstg.org.uk/activities/campaigns/public-perception
<https://www.cstg.org.uk/activities/campaigns/parent-survey/>



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