

Schools Bill For School Families

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For parents of children in schools, the Schools Bill represents a frightening 'power grab' by the DfE. Even former education ministers in the House of Lords have raised concerns over that. Under the Bill:

1. All schools must become academies, ending the dual system under which church schools have always operated.
2. New academies can only have state provided sites, closing the future possibility that any new church school can be set up. In fact, the DfE wants to prevent any new church school from being set up.
3. School governance can be decided by the DfE as the Bill gives the DfE power to remove governors and replace them itself.
4. The Bill provides that worship and RE arrangements in academies can be changed or even removed by DfE regulations.
5. Schools set up under trusts would lose the right to receive or buy extra land for their school.
6. The DfE will have the right to set the curriculum removing any freedom of choice from school heads and governors.
7. The DfE will have the right to set school hours and term times removing any freedom of choice from school heads and governors.
8. The DfE will have the right to set absence policies, completely removing the right of any parent to obtain permission from the head teacher for term time off for any reason.
9. The DfE will set fines for absences and has already indicated that these will be punitive.
10. The DfE will have the right to set admission procedures, regardless of the current admission policies of each school.
11. If you are a teacher, the DfE will set your salary level.
12. If you are a teacher the DfE can ban you from teaching not only in schools, but also online and remotely.
13. The DfE will control how the proprietors of school spend their money, completely removing their autonomy.
14. The Bill gives OFSTED the power to seize any material from a school (or anyone it thinks might be a school) that it sees fit. It will be a criminal offence to not comply.
15. The Bill introduces a register of children not in school. This does not just affect home educating families, but also erodes the rights of school children.
16. If your child takes a day off for an appointment, you will have to register with your local authority.
17. You will be under a duty to supply your local authority with any information that it demands of you, under threat of fines or imprisonment if you fail to do so, or even if you make a clerical error in doing so.
18. If you use a tutor, or out of school classes, the service provider will be under a duty to provide your child's details to the local authority.
19. If a tutor or service provider fails to provide the information, or makes a clerical error, they can face closure, fines and loss of their business.
20. If a family member educates your child with an EHCP (or 5 children or more) for some

21. Any 'setting' which provides education to one child with an EHCP or 5 or more without an EHCP will have to register as a school: no exceptions are made for childminders, tutors, after school clubs, forest schools, relatives and large families who home educate.

22. We know that children in the UK are amongst the unhappiest in Europe and that mental health in schools is a real issue for many. The Bill takes away your right to remove your child from a school without oversight of your local authority, regardless of how that authority has already failed your child.

23. If your child has an EHCP and you are served with a school attendance order, the bill prevents you from every having it revoked, even if you move from the area, or the education that you provide is suitable.

24. The Bill gives the DfE the right to close down independent schools and make it an offence for the school to continue to operate.

25. Independent schools will need to apply for DfE approval if they change their details, including: the proprietor, the address, the age range of pupils, the maximum number of pupils, whether the school is for boys or girls and whether it provides accommodation.

What this Bill does to you is take away your right, as a parent, to choose the education for your child and gives that right to faceless civil servants in the DfE who do not know your child. It makes all education provision come under the control of the DfE and local authorities with no exceptions.

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