



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Lords Written Answers

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Schools: Discrimination**

**Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL13344]** To ask Her Majesty's Government how many schools Ofsted has reported to them as operating a segregation policy; and what action has been taken as a result of any such reports.

**Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL13345]** To ask Her Majesty's Government how many schools in England treat girls differently to boys in terms of (1) common room access, (2) playground activities, (3) eating arrangements, and (4) any other activities in the school but outside the classroom.

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** In June 2018 the department published the attached guidance 'Gender separation in mixed schools', to support schools in complying with the law on this matter. Such separation is permissible when in accordance with exemptions under the Equality Act 2010 – for instance those related to the correction of educational disadvantage or the needs of different sexes, provision for competitive sports, or is insignificant enough to be regarded as de minimis.

Ofsted began systematically reporting on pupil segregation matters from September 2018 and has drawn attention to this in several inspection reports published since that date. The exact number of schools reported by Ofsted could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

The department is taking action in relation to each school where this has occurred, by seeking details of the school's plans to eliminate segregation or making organisational changes to the school and setting out the approvals process which has to be followed. The department is also in touch with a number of schools thought to operate segregation for pupils to discuss their plans, and has liaised with representative bodies for the schools involved.

Information regarding how many schools in England treat girls differently to boys in terms of (1) common room access, (2) playground activities, (3) eating arrangements, and (4) any other activities in the school but outside the classroom, is not held centrally.

## [HL13344 HL13345 Gender Separation in Mixed Schools](#)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-01-31/HL13344/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-01-31/HL13345/>

## Welsh Assembly Oral Answer

### Business Questions

**115 Leanne Wood (Plaid Cymru):** ... the former leader of UKIP in the Assembly over the weekend described his former party as an 'anti-Muslim party'. Now, we have, for a long time, recognised this truth in Plaid Cymru, including when that former AM was the leader of the party in Wales. So, will you join me in condemning any hate-based party that singles out or treats people differently on the basis of their religion, their language, or because they belong to a minority? And will you agree with me that this politics has no place in Wales and anyone pushing a dangerous or discriminatory agenda ought to be ashamed of themselves? ...

**120 Rebecca Evans (Minister for Finance and Trefnydd):** ... I would completely agree with you on the issue of any hate-based party being extremely dangerous. Politics that is centred around discrimination and hatred towards people because of their religion, their language or their minority status of any kind clearly has no place in Wales. ...

<http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/5425#C165725>

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## Israel

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israel: Drugs

**Jim Shannon (DUP) [216252]** To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that advances in medicines by Israel are shared with the UK.

**Steve Brine:** Work with Israel on medicines is led by the British Embassy in Tel Aviv, which actively seeks opportunities to create United Kingdom-Israel partnerships in the medical field. An example of collaboration on medicines is BIRAX – a bilateral research fund active since 2015 with £10 million in mainly private funding for academic partnerships between the UK and Israel. The first three years focussed on regenerative medicine; the next stage is ageing with projects to be announced in the next few months.

More broadly, the Embassy is working on other initiatives to foster UK-Israeli collaboration on health. For example, the UK Israel Tech Hub helps to create tech and innovation partnerships across several sectors, including healthcare.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-04/216252/>

#### Malaysia: Swimming

**Nigel Dodds (DUP) [216959]** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions has he had with his Malaysian counterpart on

the ban on Israeli athletes competing in Paralympics qualifying events in that country.

**Mark Field:** We do not agree with Malaysian government's position on the banning of Israeli athletes from competing at the World Para Swimming Championships. It is fundamentally wrong. We consider it right that the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) has decided to strip Malaysia of the right to host the tournament. The Championships must be open to all eligible athletes and nations to compete safely and free from discrimination.

I raised our deep concerns with the Malaysian Minister for Education, Dr Maszlee bin Malik on the 22 January, as did our High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur with Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah on the same day. We are following up on the matter with the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and will continue to monitor developments in order to speak out against discrimination of any kind and to ensure the ideals of the Olympic movement are upheld.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-05/216959/>

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## Foreign Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Slaughterhouses: Animal Welfare**

**Kerry McCarthy (Labour)** [216987] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the number of animals slaughtered without prior stunning in the UK of the UK's recent agreement with Saudi Arabia to lift the ban on lamb exports to that country.

**David Rutley:** The agreement with Saudi Arabia lifted restrictions on exports which were a legacy of the BSE outbreak in the 1990s. The agreement was not specific to stun or non-stun slaughter. Moreover, a significant proportion of halal meat produced in the UK is stunned before slaughter. Since the market with Saudi Arabia has been opened, no exports of sheep meat to Saudi Arabia have taken place.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-05/216987/>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.html>

#### **International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/internationaldevelopmentassistancepalestiniannationalauthoritieschools.html>

## **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

## **Online Forums Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

## **Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

## **Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/palestinianstatehoodrecognition.html>

## **Scottish Parliament**

### **Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 2 days**

**Draft guidance to challenge bullying in schools** [Wales only] (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/draft-guidance-challenge-bullying-schools>

**One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here** (closing date 24 February 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

**Racial harassment in higher education** (closing date 28 February 2019)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/racial-harassment-higher-education-our-inquiry>

**Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission – Draft Strategic Plan 2019-22**

(closing date 15 March 2019)

<http://www.nihrc.org/news/detail/ni-human-rights-commission-draft-strategic-plan-2019-2022-consultation>

**Scottish charity law** (closing date 1 April 2019)

<https://tinyurl.com/y9ln88df>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438