

His Eminence Vincent Cardinal Nichols
Archbishop's House
Ambrosden Avenue
London
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12th September 2020

Your Eminence,

We write to you, as Catholic fathers, with the responsibility for the moral education and spiritual formation of our children, regarding the British government's legislation imposing pro-LGBT Relationships and Sex Education on school-children in England.

It is shocking and deeply troubling to us that the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, of which you are President, have consistently and publicly supported legislative changes and RSE policy which now denies parents the right to remove their children from Relationships and Sex Education, and that, on your behalf, the Catholic Education Service (CES) has wrongly stated that the Government is committed to protecting the parents' right to withdraw their children from the new subjects. In fact, parents have the right, only, to "request" withdrawal from the (undefined) "sex education" parts of RSE, with the final decision to be made by the head teacher.

We are bewildered and outraged that, backed by the CES on behalf of the CBCEW, this same legislation has resulted in Final Guidance (June 2019) and Regulations which include that:

- Children should be provided with "the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices and options" and signposted as to where and how to obtain abortion and contraception services without parental knowledge or consent. Carrying an unborn child to term is presented simply as one of the possible "choices" when pregnant, alongside that of having an abortion – "about which pupils should receive medically and legally accurate, *impartial* information" [our emphasis] (p.23).
- LGBT content is expected, "at a timely point", to be "fully integrated" into the children's programme of study, which should present homosexual relationships and family structures in a positive manner (pp. 15, 20-21, 25-27).
- Real marriage and the natural family unit are side-lined. Redefined to include same sex "marriage" (and on a par with civil partnerships), marriage is simply presented as one possible relationship option. The emphasis is on the diversity of different "healthy" relationships and family structure (pp. 13-14, 25-27).

In a recent letter to a supporter of one of our groups, Your Eminence, you said that you were "confident that RSE can be taught faithfully and effectively in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church" and that "a Catholic approach to RSE has existed long before the introduction of statutory RSE". We, however, in respect of documents already published by the CES, on behalf of the CBCEW, have no such confidence in a "Catholic" approach to RSE being adopted in England and Wales.

Learning to Love (2017), for example, an RSE guide for Catholic educators, published by the CES on behalf of the CBCEW, offers what it calls its own "fresh description" of the Church's teaching, referring to same sex relationships as being able to constitute a "powerful" and an "exalted form of love" on a par with that between husband and wife in marriage (pp.2, 17).

In another publication, *Made in God's Image: Challenging homophobic and biphobic bullying in Catholic schools* (2017; 2nd edn 2018), a joint venture between the CES and the Aquinas Centre for Theological Literacy, St Mary's University, both Scripture and Catholic teaching is gravely misrepresented so as to intimidate Catholic schools into promoting the LGBT agenda. The overriding message that is conveyed to children through the eight part scheme of work is that being "lesbian, gay bisexual or transgender" is part of their God-given purpose and identity, an integral part of being "Made in God's image". In one of the word games children are given to play in the publication, "homophobia" is described as:

"A range of negative attitudes and feelings towards *homosexuality* or people who are identified or perceived as being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). It can be expressed as antipathy, contempt, prejudice, *aversion*, or hatred, may be *based on irrational fear*, and is sometimes related to religious beliefs [our emphasis]" (p. 16).

By warning children so emphatically against any "negative attitudes and feelings towards *homosexuality*" (as opposed to homosexual persons), the document is clearly intended to promote *homosexuality* per se as only something positive – especially due to the omission of Scriptural truths or the fullness of Church teaching concerning homosexual acts.

Furthermore, under your chairmanship, the CES developed a policy that resulted in providing children in Catholic schools, including adolescents under the age of consent, with access to abortion and contraception services, without parental knowledge or consent via the Government agency Connexions. More recently in 2019, in the archdiocese of Liverpool, *No Outsiders*, an RSE programme written by homosexual activist Andrew Moffat MBE, has been described as "fine to use in school" in an Education newsletter, Summer 2019, sent to Catholic schools by the Liverpool Archdiocese Centre for Evangelisation (LACE). We have documented evidence that at least ten Catholic primary schools in the Archdiocese are using *No Outsiders*, which declares as its express aim to teach pupils that "to be a person who is gay or lesbian or transgender or bisexual is normal, acceptable and OK".

Before delivering this letter to you today, we knelt and prayed the Rosary for you on the Piazza in front of Westminster Cathedral. We, and the members of the groups which we lead, most of them parents like ourselves, are praying and offering sacrifices for you and for your brother bishops in England and Wales, and we respectfully ask you to pray for us. As parents, we share with you, our bishops, the certainty that, on Judgement Day, we will be accountable to God for the eternal souls of the children in our care, and not to the Government for the implementation of their ideological and corrupt agenda.

Above all our prayer is that the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, endowed with the authority of Christ to teach the Catholic faith, will change direction and lead parents in Britain, both Catholic and non-Catholic, in resisting legislation which threatens the immortal souls of our nation's children. In this connection, we note, with some appreciation, signs of such an approach beginning to be adopted by the CES under Bishop Stock, its new chairman. We pray that this new approach will be sustained and developed further now that the Children & Social Work Act (2017), making the new subjects of Relationships Education compulsory in all English primary schools, and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all English secondary schools, comes into force this month, albeit with a partial reprieve until the start of summer term 2021 due to the recent national lockdown.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Coalition in Defence of
PRIMARY EDUCATORS

James Leatherland
Co-Founder of Catholic Man UK

Dr Joseph Shaw
Chairman of the Latin Mass Society

John Smeaton
CEO of the Society for the Protection
of Unborn Children