

What is secularism?

Activity: What might secularists think about...?

Do you think secularists would be in favour of the following or not?

How might the arguments for freedom, fairness, and peace influence their views?

- 1) **State funded faith schools** that can teach a form of religious education that presents one particular worldview as the truth, and that are allowed to select their pupils based on the religion of their parents
- 2) **Collective worship** in schools that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character
- 3) **Humanist weddings** being legally recognised in the same way that religious weddings are
- 4) **Bishops** sitting by right in parliament in the House of Lords
- 5) Funding for **non-religious chaplains/pastoral carers** in prisons and hospitals alongside religious chaplains
- 6) Free **public transport** for children to religious schools but not for all children to all schools
- 7) The inclusion of non-religious perspectives as well as religious perspectives on public broadcasting programmes such as **BBC Radio 4's Thought for the Day**
- 8) **Prayer rooms** being made available in public spaces such as hospitals
- 9) Wearing **religious clothing** in public places such as schools
- 10) Bank holidays being scheduled on and around **religious festivals**
- 11) **Holiday entitlements** for staff with religious beliefs on holy days
- 12) **Freedom to criticise** religious or non-religious beliefs in public

Secularists may differ on their feelings about the above. Generally they consider whether a policy, service, or situation treats people of different religions and no religion fairly, and whether people's freedoms are restricted in ways that are unfair or unjustifiable.

Humanists UK, for example, might reference secularism when campaigning...

- against 1, 2, 4, and 6
- and for 3, 5, 7, and 12