

KS1 Lesson Plan 2 – Exploring Secularism

What are Children's Rights?

Background	<p>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important agreement by countries who have promised to protect children's rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child explains who children are, all their rights, and the responsibilities of governments. All the rights are connected, they are all equally important and they cannot be taken away from children.</p> <p>This lesson will concentrate primarily on Article 14 – <i>“You have the right to think for yourself, to choose what you believe and to practise your religion, provided this does not stop other people enjoying their rights. Your parents should support and guide you in these matters.”</i></p> <p>This article is particularly relevant to studying secularism as it is a core secularist principle that people should have the right to practice their personal religion (or non-religion) or belief, but that this should never be forced on others.</p> <p>Secularists believe that the government should stay out of people's religious beliefs and should not support religious practices or beliefs. This requires the state and its services to be religiously neutral.</p>
Subjects	Citizenship
Curriculum Links	<p>The DfE Citizenship programme of study at KS1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils should be taught:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to recognise what they like and dislike, what is fair and unfair, and what is right and wrong• to share their opinions on things that matter to them and explain their views2. Pupils should be taught:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to take part in discussions with one other person and the whole class• to take part in a simple debate about topical issues• to recognise choices they can make, and recognise the difference between right and wrong5. Give the opportunity to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• take part in discussions (for example, talking about topics of school, local, national, European, Commonwealth and global concern)• consider social and moral dilemmas that they come across in everyday life (for example, aggressive behaviour, questions of fairness, right and wrong, simple political issues, use of money, simple environmental issues)
Key Question	What are children's rights?

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Learning Outcomes	<p>Expected: Pupils can explain why article 14 is important to them giving an example.</p> <p>Greater Depth: Pupils can explain why article 14 is important to all children giving a range of examples.</p>
Links	Children's Rights PowerPoint
Stimulus	<p>Look at the UNCRC in child-friendly language from the UNICEF website.</p> <p>https://www.unicef.org/media/56661/file</p> <p>Article 14 says:</p> <p>“Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.”</p> <p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How many different factors can you think of that influence your opinions about the world and your life? <p>Factors could include parents/ friends/ school/ teachers/ TV/ films/ the online world – social media/ YouTube/ newspapers/ magazines/ books/ celebrities/-siblings/religious leaders etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can you <i>order</i> these influences from ‘Most influential to Least influential’?• Which or who do you think has the most influence on what <i>you</i> believe in?• What do you believe in that is the same as what your parents/carers believe in?• Do you have any opinions or beliefs that are different from your parent's? <p>The children discuss the following statements - when they feel the statement is supported by 12 or 14, they can respond by saying,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Yes! It's my right”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I have to believe everything my teacher tells me.• Adults should listen seriously to me when I feel strongly about something.• I have to believe in the same religion as my family.• My school is religious, but I can make my own mind up.• My parents don't believe in religion – that means I can't believe in religion.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can make my own mind up about religion. • I can decide not to join in prayers at school. • It’s fine to say I don’t really know what I believe.
Exercise	Pupils match the statements <i>below</i> to UNCRC articles.
Take it Further	Children use the statements linked to articles 12 and 14 to role play some of the scenarios – focus on both sides staying respectful and polite whilst still making the point.
What do Secularists Think About Children’s Rights?	<p>Secularism protects children’s rights and equality. Secularism ensures religion never undermines universal human rights. It ensures that everyone, regardless of their religion or belief, is treated equally. It resists religious exemptions that undermine equality laws and champions individual liberty by ensuring the judicial process is not hindered or replaced by religious courts and tribunals.</p> <p>Secularism protects religious freedom. Secularism protects everyone’s (including children’s) religious freedoms including the right to practise or change their religion or follow no religion at all. It protects an individual’s right to practise their faith, provided they don’t infringe on the rights of others. Secularism also prevents government interference with the doctrines of religious bodies, and gives them freedom, within the law, to organise as they see fit.</p>

Article 14	Article 12
You have the right to think for yourself to choose what you believe and to practise your religion, provided this does not stop other people enjoying their rights. Your parents should support and guide you in these matters.	When important decisions are being made that affect you, you have the right to give your opinion and to be taken seriously.

Choose whether these statements are related to article 12 or article 14, both or neither.

1. Should my parents talk to me about which secondary school I am going to? (Yes-12)
2. My dad is moving to another country – can I say I don’t want him to? (Yes-12)
3. I believe in God/Gods, but my parents don’t – is this OK? (Yes 12&14)
4. My parents want to take me out of school for a term to go and visit family in another country – can I say I don’t want to go? (Yes-12)
5. My teacher is breaking my rights! He said I’m not allowed to play football at break time! (No-it’s not a ‘important’ decision.)
6. I think everyone should have to follow the same religion as me. (No-14)
7. My best friend doesn’t believe in god but I’m going to force her to believe in my religion. (No-14)

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8. I want to talk to the Headteacher about school lunches – I'm a vegan and there isn't ever a vegan option. (Yes-12)
9. I'm refusing to go to the Temple, Mosque, Church, Gurudwara etc because I don't believe in what they say. (You have the right to talk to your parents about what you believe/don't believe but they are expected to guide you and can make decisions for you.)
10. I want to talk to my teacher about the girl I sit next to in class because she's really distracting me from my learning. (Yes-12)
11. Can my parents force me to adopt a religion? (No-14)
12. Can my carer force me to stop following my religion? (No-14)
13. Can my school tell me that I'm not allowed to become a vegetarian? (No-14)