

## Submission

The government should definitely retain the current situation with regard to DGR status for religious instruction in schools because of the following reasons:

1. It is people of faith who already have a philanthropic outlook on life and are aware of the challenges facing others and care about doing something to remedy this. It is my Christian faith which impels me not to look away when I see a need which I can, even in a small way help to alleviate. The fact that I can obtain a tax deduction means that I have more funds to distribute to the 10 charities I support. It is imperative that this ability is not lost in relation to funding religious education.
2. Religious instruction in schools (RIGS) is carried out by an army of dedicated trained teacher volunteers in accordance with a legislative mandate – The Education Act 1990 section 32 - at no cost to the government. Clearly funds are needed and these are currently supplied by ordinary 'mums and dads' who would be unable to be so generous if they were to lose the (RIGS) tax relief for a portion of their offering.
3. Benefits of religious education in schools.  
There are psychological benefits for children attending SRE – they have a break from their regular classes and receive instruction from a person who cares about them. The class teacher benefits from having some pupil free time and the chance to observe the class in a different situation. Since there are Muslim, Bah' ai, Hindi, Jewish and other faiths taught in SRE, the classes could be said to promote multiculturalism and social acceptance. This reduces the risk of student radicalisation.
4. By supporting RIGS, the government would be helping to raise up the next generation of potential givers – if children are denied this opportunity, there is the likelihood for this source of giving to dry up. Studies have shown that people of faith are 25% more likely than their secular counterparts to donate money<sup>1</sup>. RIGS needs the funds currently provided by donors to function and if this supply is curtailed through loss of DGR status leading children to be deprived of religious education, they are less likely to become donors.
5. Since the government has the long term objective of increasing philanthropy, knee capping the support for R.E. in schools would be an own goal and ultimately counter productive.
6. The government should recognise and applaud the value, which, by upholding moral standards and increasing cohesiveness SRE brings to society, and accordingly support religious education in schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Hoover institution: *Religious faith and charitable giving* -1 October 2023