

Tekst 2

Church v state

STEPHEN BATES (“Suffer the little children . . .”, Education Supplement, 2 October) fails to mention one of the vital advantages of church schools over inner-city state schools: that most of the children who attend them are taught in their mother-tongue. This gives them a head start over pupils taught in their second language, including more than half the school population here in Tower Hamlets. Bilingualism, while a proven advantage in life as a whole, slows down progress in the national curriculum.

Many Christian children do indeed opt out of our state schools to seek secondary church schooling elsewhere. Oona King, our MP, has castigated this as “white flight”. Lord Dearing’s initial report speaks of unsatisfied parental demand for church schools. What about unsatisfied parental demand for Muslim schools? And what next? Divided children leading to a divided society, as in Northern Ireland? Our children need secular schools, like those in France and the US.

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‘New Statesman’

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- 1p 3 ■ In which sentence does Joan Griffiths express what she is essentially worried about?
- A ‘Bilingualism ... curriculum.’
 - B ‘Many ... elsewhere.’
 - C ‘What about ... schools?’
 - D ‘Divided ... Northern Ireland?’