



Department
for Education

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Ed,

Your team wrote asking some questions on the evidence presented in the Faith Schools section of the consultation document "Schools That Work for Everyone", following a complaint you had received. There were two main points raised

- 1) Whether the correct data had been referenced in the section.
- 2) Whether the evidence needed a stronger comparator.

Upon investigation, it was clear that the data referenced did not show all the information necessary for readers to see the underpinning data. We have published an amended version of the consultation document today to ensure that readers of the consultation document have the full information available including comparators. To make this easy for readers we have added this as a table rather than a reference. The text has also been amended to correctly refer to the right data.

On the issue of comparators, the argument presented in the consultation document is that one type of school - Catholic - haven't opened any free schools under the cap, but Catholic schools are still more ethnically diverse than those new faith free schools that have been opened. From this, the consultation document is arguing that the cap hasn't helped get more diverse schools as by stopping more Catholic Free schools opening, it may have had a cost in this respect. The case being made is not that non-Catholic faith schools are less diverse than after the cap was introduced (which would have required further comparators as the complaint pointed out), but that it is preventing faith schools that are generally more diverse - Catholic free schools - from opening.

In this instance processes involving analysts were followed. Unfortunately, the referencing issue was not spotted at the time.

I'd like to thank your team for raising the query and would re-assure users that they can contact me with any concerns about statistics in DfE.

I am copying this letter to the National Statistician, John Pullinger.

Yours sincerely,

Iain Bell