

Statement on Homosexuality

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This statement is posted at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly.

(The statement was prepared for a London SACRE, whose members were concerned at the introduction into schools of material which seemed to approve of, and even promote, homosexuality. That body was devising an approach to the education authorities which would show the concern of the various faith communities about such material.

The National Spiritual Assembly feels it should be shared with the Friends. The subject of homosexuality is complex and is also politically and emotionally charged, and the statement does not claim to be exhaustive, but it can be used with wisdom as part of a response to questions.)

STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

The National Spiritual Assembly, as the elected administrative body for the Bahá'í Faith in the United Kingdom, is concerned at some aspects of the sexual education of schoolchildren in this country.

Bahá'ís believe that the sexual impulse is a God-given one, and the source of great joy and fulfilment if expressed in the intended way. The appropriate circumstance for this is within marriage, the legally, socially, and spiritually sanctioned union of two adults of the opposite sex. Other expressions are neither valid nor to be encouraged.

We recognise that this ideal, of chastity before marriage and fidelity within it, is unfashionable. However it is taught by the world's great religions, and is part of the basis of a stable and civilised society. Its rejection is in part a cause and in part an effect of the stresses, strain, and devaluation of people, that is occurring in the present-day world.

The moral and sexual education of children cannot be taken separately, and must be based upon heterosexuality, fidelity, and the family unit.

Bahá'ís reject the idea that homosexuality is something to be regarded as normal and its practice merely a valid lifestyle alternative. While it is wrong to condemn homosexuals as people, the sexual practice of homosexuality is no more an acceptable activity than is heterosexual activity outside marriage.

We are concerned that homosexuality is being taught as if it were normal, and even more so when this is done to children of a vulnerable and readily-influenced age. We also abhor the introduction of loaded words such as "homophobia" and "heterosexism" to try to convey the idea that rejection of homosexuality is as prejudiced and discriminatory as racism, sexism, and other biases and intolerances which society is so painfully outgrowing. These words

are designed to cow those opposed to the promotion of homosexuality by generating an atmosphere in which any disagreement is automatically represented as due to blind prejudice and bigotry.

Bahá'ís feel that there is so much common ground between the teachings of the world's faiths on this important subject that there should be no difficulty about their standing together against the values being promoted by the forces of secularism in our society.

— Statement on Homosexuality (Used by permission of the curator)