

Moscow Parents Complain of School's 'Religious Propaganda'

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Peter Kovalev / TASS

Parents at a Moscow school have complained to Russia's Prosecutor General about "religious propaganda classes" being taught to students, [the Kommersant newspaper reported Friday](#).

Parents from Moscow school No. 2065 said that religious ideology was being "imposed" on government schools through compulsory classes on Russian "spiritual and moral culture."

Students aged 12 to 15 years old take the course in 62 regions across Russia, Kommersant reported.

Parents said the textbook is unduly biased toward the Russian Orthodox Church and is inappropriate for a class with Jewish, Catholic, Adventist, Muslim and atheist children.

Read more on the bitter stand-off between [protesters and the Russian Orthodox Church tearing apart a Moscow neighborhood](#).

"We were told In September that there was no way of opting out of the class," parent Inna Gerasimova told Kommersant. She claimed that the children's textbook "constantly referred to evil spirits, holy water, guardian angels, and miracles related to [Orthodox] icons."

"Even Orthodox parents are opposed to having their religion imposed on others," she told Kommersant.

The Moscow Department of Education said that the course was not designed to focus on "any particular religious denomination" and denied allegations of bias. The textbooks were selected by teachers after considering the opinions of parents and experts, the department said.

Russian officials are currently considering introducing classes dedicated to Orthodox Christian culture into Russian schools, [local media reported last month](#).

Russian children in grades one to 11 would be expected to cover such subjects as "moral culture in the Orthodox family" and "the Christian warrior," with 14-year-olds expected to describe different kinds of church bells, name the seven Ecumenical councils, and use the Orthodox calendar.

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