
Religious freedom in our school

A resolution relating to the topic of the importance of religious freedom, and respect for religious belief, in our school.

Preamble

This resolution notes:

- i. “Freedom of religion or belief is not just an optional extra, or nice to have; it is the key human right. It allows everyone to follow their conscience in the way they see fit” (Baroness Anelay of St Johns, in the House of Lords, 16 July 2015).
- ii. Our school should promote human rights including the commitment that “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and... to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance” (UDHR, Article 18).
- iii. ‘No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice’ (UN ICCPR, Article 18).

School resolution

1. The school is required by the Equality Act 2010 to ensure an individual is not discriminated against because of their religion or belief.
2. It is illegal to use words, behaviour, written material, recordings or programmes which are threatening and intended to stir up religious hatred.
3. Encourages the creation of a school ethos in which all students and staff have the right to enjoy their religion without fear, hatred, or judgement from others.
4. Condemns intolerance and hate speech in the UK.
5. Further condemns that there is still a legal requirement for schools to hold a daily act of collective worship of a mainly or broadly Christian character.
6. Recommends that our school should provide assemblies to reflect the range of religious beliefs (and none) and allow students to opt in or out according to their belief.
7. Recommends that the school should ensure that all students and staff can follow their own religion, including adapting uniforms and wearing religious symbols to reflect their beliefs; and attending religious meetings at appropriate times.
8. Recommends that no-one should be allowed to offend others because of their religious beliefs, and that the definition of offence should be decided by the person who was offended, not the person who spoke or acted in an offensive manner.