Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Bishop Vaughan's policy is informed by the school's Catholic ethos. The policy also follows the principles of the LA policy. The LA policy "English as an Additional Language" is included, as is "Valuing Diversity".

Equality of Race and Opportunity at Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

General Statement of Policy

The Governors of Bishop Vaughan are aware that as long ago as 1979 the Bishops Conference of England and Wales said:

'Through a long and constant process Britain has become irreversibly a multi-racial, multi-cultural society.'

Governors note that this is true within our own Diocese of Menevia. For many years groups from all parts of Europe and the nations of the world have come to settle in Swansea and its environs, bringing with them all that is most precious, their families, their customs and their way of life. Within the Church this diversity is not a basis for division. The underlying and overriding principle of our faith is Jesus Christ binds us together in love, understanding and mutual enrichment.

'You are, all of you, sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. All baptised in Christ, you have all clothed yourself in Christ and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus.' *(Galatians 3: 26-29)*

The Gospel itself leaves us in no doubt that our belief in its values should place us in the forefront of the movement for racial justice and harmony.

Governors and all who work at Bishop Vaughan are aware of the need to review continuously, policy and practice in the matter of equality of race and opportunity. Otherwise, it is all too easy to fall into a type of 'racism by default': the unspoken assumption is made that all pupils in the school share the same background and cultures. When this assumption permeates the curriculum and organisation of the school, alienation and disaffection readily set in among pupils of minority ethnic groups.

Governors and staff understand the definition of institutional racism as: -

'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their culture, colour or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtless and racist stereotyping, which disadvantages minority ethnic people.'

And will be alert so as to ensure this does not occur.

The school is opposed to all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. Language or behaviour which is racist or potentially damaging to any ethnic or racial group will not be tolerated. The school adopts the definition of a racist incident as being '*any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.*'

Aims

At Bishop Vaughan we aim to tackle racial discrimination and actively promote race equality and good race relations in all areas of school life.

To achieve this aim we:
- assess and monitor pupil progress and attainment, tracking individual and ethnic groups where applicable and taking appropriate action;
- deal with all behaviour and discipline issues with regard to the individual;
- monitor each pupil's personal development and provide support where necessary;
- take regard of cultural differences in ways of teaching and learning, providing full access to the curriculum;
- our admissions criteria will not detrimentally affect any racial or ethnic group;
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary; we will recognise pupils' right to take time off for religious observance;
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the governing body;
- promote a partnership with all parents, providing translators and interpreters when necessary.

LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Bishop Vaughan School is committed to:
- being proactive in promoting racial equality, harmonious race relations and tackling racial discrimination;
- encouraging, supporting and enabling all pupils and staff to reach their potential;
- working in partnership with parents and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate racial equality good practice and tackle racial discrimination ensuring that our Equal Opportunities policy is followed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to:

- ensure that the school complies with the latest Race Relations legislation;
- ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out;
- scrutinise the recording and reporting procedures at least annually;
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy.

The named governor for race equality issues is Mr H Hansen

The Headteacher

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to:
- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support, take appropriate action in any cases of racial discrimination;
- deal with reported incidents of racism or racial harassment in line with LA guidance; this includes reporting racist incidents on the Racist Incident Monitoring Form;
- ensure that visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with the school's policy;
- report progress to governors annually.
- In discharging their responsibilities, the Headteacher is assisted by the Senior Leadership Team.

The named person for racial incidents is Mr C Walker, Assistant Headteacher, and Mrs K Jones, Business Manager (in respect of contractors).

Director of Learning Theology

The Director of Learning Theology will ensure that RE lessons and the Programme of Study fulfil the requirements of the Curriculum Directory of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. In so doing, this will ensure that there is a fidelity to the Catholic Tradition which recognises, values and respects truth and goodwill in other Faiths.

The Director of Learning Theology is Mrs H Hansen.

Director of Learning Personal and Social Education and Careers and the World of Work

The Director of Learning for PSE will ensure that race and cultural diversity issues are addressed in the implementation of the PSE Framework throughout the school, developing attitudes and value which promote understanding of diversity and equality and which challenge racism.

The Director of Learning PSE is Ms K Smith

All Staff
It is the responsibility of all staff to:
- deal with racist incidents according to our policy. This means assessing severity and context, taking opportunity to explain to pupils the wrongfulness and what it feels like to be the victim of such an incident, implementing the good conduct code, seeking senior management help as necessary and ensuring the incident is reported.
- identify and challenge racial bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture;
- promote racial equality and good race relations and not discriminate on racial grounds;
- promote an inclusive curriculum which reflects the multi-ethnic nature of society;
- keep up to date with race relations' legislation by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate agencies.

Breaches of the Policy

Involving Pupils
The incident will be discussed with pupil(s) and the appropriate action taken according to the school's code of conduct.

Involving staff and governors
The incident will be discussed with the Headteacher and the member of staff will be reminded of the policy and how it should be implemented.

Serious breaches will be dealt with in accordance with the school's grievance procedures and Local Authority racial harassment guidelines.

Involving other people, including parents
The incident will be discussed with the headteacher in a meeting and the person concerned will be made aware of the breach of policy and reminded about its implementation. If this is not possible a letter will be sent from the headteacher to the person involved regarding the incident.

In the case of serious breaches then the incident will be reported to the Governing Body and the LA. If necessary, the police will be informed too.

POLICY PLANNING AND REVIEW

Policy planning and development
- In the planning and development stage of curriculum policy-making, Directors of Learning will assess the possible impact on racial equality.

- The impact of the policy on race relations will be evaluated with staff through discussion of the data collected.
- Race equality targets in terms of pupil attainment will be incorporated into the School Development Plan.

Ethnic Monitoring
- Each pupil's progress is monitored. The resulting data is divided into ethnic groups, so that the attainment and progress of the groups can be monitored.
- The data thus collected is used to inform further school planning and decision-making.

Reviewing and assessing policies
- The effectiveness and impact of measures to eliminate racial discrimination, promote racial equality and good race relations are evaluated in the regular reviewing of policies.

- The effectiveness and impact of measures to eliminate racial discrimination, promote racial equality and good race relations are considered when carrying out school self-review and evaluation and the outcome is used to inform decision-making.

Making the results of monitoring and assessments available
- The results of the monitoring will be sent to the LA on the appropriate forms within the time schedule agreed.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The policy will be implemented by all members of the school. It will permeate through all other policies.

All staff and Governors will have a copy of the policy. Additional copies of the policy will be available for parents, other stakeholders on request and published on the school's website. If translated copies of the policy are needed, the school will make the appropriate arrangements as far as possible.

As with all other policies operating within the school, this equal opportunities policy will be the subject of continuous review and evaluation. Comments and contributions from all interested parties will be welcome and will be considered if there is a perceived need to adapt this policy. This will take place as part of the policy review process.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

As far as possible training will be made available to Governors and to staff as part of their continuing professional development.

The training may be courses for individuals, groups or for the whole staff/whole governing body.

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Copies of this policy are available on our website, in policy folders on the school network and can be made available on request.

Date: October 2015

Policy Review Date: June 2019

Policy Next Review Date: June 2021

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) POLICY

1   Introduction

1.1   This Policy is concerned with *bilingual learners (hereafter referred to as bilingual EAL learners) in Swansea schools who have a home language other than English or Welsh and who are in the process of learning to use English as an additional language for educational purposes.

2   C o n t e x t

2.1   Bilingual EAL learners in Swansea come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Most are clustered in several schools in and around the centre of Swansea, with increasing numbers of isolated learners in ever growing numbers of schools across the LEA.

2.2   Bilingual EAL learners in schools in Swansea come from a variety of language and literacy backgrounds. Some have arrived at school having had a certain amount of exposure to the English language and the local culture; others are newcomers to both. Some have developed literacy skills in their home language; others are pre-literate. Some have comparable schooling to their age equivalent peers; others may have experienced interrupted or no previous education.

2.3   The majority of bilingual EAL learners' families have settled permanently in Swansea. The remainder may stay in the country for a period of anywhere between 1 and 3 years.

3   Statement of Intent

3.1.   The City and County of Swansea's English as an Additional Language Service helps schools carry out their responsibility to bilingual learners in their entitlement to equal access to the National Curriculum and in the achievement of their academic potential.

*****Bilingual ... the term is currently used to refer to pupils who live in two languages, who have access to, or who need to use two or more languages at home and at school. It does not mean that they have fluency in both languages or that they are competent and literate in both languages (Cited in Hall, D 1995, - Assessing the Needs of Bilingual Pupils, London, Fulton).**

4 Statutory Framework

4.1 1994 Act.

4.2 1988 Education Reform Act.

4.3 1976 Race Relations Act.

 4.3.1. The 1976 Act does not explicitly recognise the unequal status of different ethnic groups in society. It does, however, make provision for positive action by which it is not unlawful to provide persons of a particular ethnic group with special access to facilities or services to meet welfare or any ancillary benefits provided they have a particular need which is met by such provisions.

5 Underlying Principles

5.1 All bilingual EAL learners are entitled to the full range of pre-school and statutory educational services

5.2 All bilingual EAL learners are entitled to equal opportunities of educational success.

5.3 Bilingualism / multilingualism is an achievement which is educationally enriching.

5.4 Having a home language other than English or Welsh is not a learning difficulty. Special Educational Needs and the needs of bilingual EAL learners are not identical neither are they mutually exclusive.

6 LEA Objectives

6.1. The City and County of Swansea's EAL Service aims to achieve the following objectives:-

 6.1.1. To ensure that all bilingual EAL learners participate in and gain access to mainstream and National Curriculum provision.

 6.1.2. To support bilingual EAL learners in their acquisition of English language skills across the curriculum.

 6.1.3. To ensure that bilingual EAL learners attain National Curriculum levels appropriate to their intellectual ability.

 6.1.4. To assess and monitor progress in the acquisition of English as an additional language for all bilingual EAL learners at both primary and secondary levels.

6.1.5. To promote partnership teaching and other appropriate methods of supporting bilingual EAL learners.

6.1.6. To provide training for subject/class teachers in strategies that will address the needs of bilingual EAL learners.

6.1.7. To support bilingual EAL learners through the home language(s) and offer interpreting/translating services to schools and parents of bilingual EAL learners.

6.1.8. To develop resources, including home language materials, that will enhance the linguistic skills and conceptual understanding of bilingual EAL learners.

6.1.9. To develop home/school/community links.

7 Governors' Responsibilities

7.1 Governors have an obligation to take positive action to 'provide persons of a particular ethnic group with special access to facilities or services to meet the particular needs of that group'. (1976 Race Relations Act).

7.2 Governors have a responsibility to meet the requirements of the 1944, 1981 and 1988 Education Acts. (See Statutory Framework Section 4).

8 Headteacher's Responsibilities

8.1 Headteachers of each school should ensure that the needs of bilingual EAL learners are identified and provided for.

8.2 Headteachers of each school should refer pupils deemed to be in need of support to the English as an Additional Language Service via the Service's Referral Form (EAL 1).

8.3 Headteachers of each school should ensure that bilingual EAL learners are integrated into mainstream education.

9 Assessment

9.1 It should be recognised that bilingual EAL learners can make rapid progress in acquiring English but also to be fully competent in the use of academic language for learning can take up to 10 years **(see Collier '97)**. The level of competency (particularly of literacy) in the home language(s) directly affects the time taken to acquire English as an additional language.

9.2 Careful assessment should be undertaken by EAL support staff to ensure that the learning needs of all bilingual EAL learners are met.

9.3. Assessment is carried out according to the five Stages (A - E) defined by the EAL Service to classify pupils according to competence in English. These identify need and contribute to defining the level of support provided for pupils.

9.4. Assessment in home language will be carried out by a Bilingual Support Worker, where deemed appropriate.

9.5. Other assessment should comply with procedures used for all other pupils in the school concerned, e.g. SATs.

9.6. Care should be taken to ensure that assessment is not culturally biased against pupils from particular ethnic groups or influenced by unconscious assumptions about relative abilities and characteristics of different ethnic groups.

9.7. Care should be taken when assessing bilingual EAL learners who might also have Special Educational Needs (SEN). The numbers of these pupils should be in the same proportion as found in the monolingual population.

10 Curriculum Planning

10.1 All pupils have curriculum learning needs, bilingual EAL learners also have language learning needs.

10.2 Language is best learned in a meaningful context - the mainstream classroom.

10.3 Bilingual EAL learners should be encouraged to use their home language in the learning environment.

10.4 The richness of linguistic diversity should be celebrated through the curriculum.

10.5 Knowledge and understanding of other cultures can be enhanced for indigenous pupils by drawing on the experiences of bilingual EAL learners and integrating it into the curriculum.

11 Teaching Process

11.1 Specialist EAL teachers support bilingual EAL learners in their learning of English across the curriculum in partnership with subject /class teachers.

11.2 The partnership model adopted by the EAL Service is well researched, highly commended and complies with the 1976 Race Relations Act.

11.3 Whenever appropriate/possible support is provided through a pupil's home language by bilingual support workers.

11.4 In addition to the support provided by the EAL Service every subject/class teacher has responsibility for the language development of bilingual EAL .

12 Conclusion

12.1 The best progress in language learning is made when subject/class teachers, EAL support teachers and bilingual support workers work closely together and with the co-operation of the pupils themselves and their parents.

12.2 It is evident that the progress of bilingual EAL learners is significantly influenced by school and community ethos and by teacher attitude and expectation. It is therefore important that schools value and celebrate cultural and linguistic diversity.

Valuing Diversity

Awareness raising for schools

Contents

Introduction

A great advantage and strength of education in Swansea is the wide range of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds of the children and young people attending local schools. As well as being a source of pride and a tremendous resource for learning, this diversity in schools and in the community is also an important expression of the fact that Swansea benefits from being a multi-faith, multi-lingual and multi-cultural city.

Many of the pupils attending Swansea schools are committed to beliefs and practices that have their origins in different faiths; others hold views about the way they should live that have less to do with faith, than with deep-rooted cultures and traditions. Equally, given that Swansea has more than thirteen visible and non-visible minority communities, the diversity of languages within the City and County of Swansea is a fundamental strength, indeed more than fifty languages other than English or Welsh are spoken. There is also a community of gypsy travellers with their own culture and history.

For parents/carers and pupils, it is very important that schools have as full an understanding as possible of the cultural and religious values that are lived by as well as the languages that are spoken. It is a fundamental right of all pupils that schools respect and understand their traditions, languages and faiths.

This booklet is intended to help everyone working in Swansea schools better to understand some of the different beliefs and customs that exist within the community, to enable schools to meet the needs of all pupils and to contribute to celebrating the diversity within and beyond the community of the school. Although it is very unwise to generalise about the beliefs or way of life of any religious, cultural or ethnic group, the booklet provides some broad guidance. It is not intended to imply that all Christians believe precisely the same or that Muslim families all have the same commitment to Islamic practice. All faiths contain different levels of commitment amongst their adherents and these need to be established and understood.

Each individual is the greatest expert about what he or she believes, and wherever possible should always be consulted first when any clarification is needed. Stereotyping members of particular religious or ethnic groups is not only offensive, but also a great mistake, since there are as many different opinions and ways of life amongst Hindus and Muslims as among Christians or non-religious groups. Similarly, there are as many differences between people whose ethnic origin is Bangladeshi as there are between those of Welsh or English origin.

This publication provides information and advice to schools about a range of issues related to the multi-faith, multi-lingual and multi-cultural pupil population, including

those pupils for whom English is an additional language. It is intended that the booklet will provide some guidance that schools may find helpful when considering the needs of pupils and their families. Schools may obtain further help and advice in dealing with some of the issues raised in this booklet by referring to the appendices.

Issues related to faith, and issues related to faith and culture

This section is concerned with aspects of school life that present daily opportunities to demonstrate to pupils and parents/carers a sensitive and positive approach to religious and cultural diversity. Schools will want to be flexible in catering for religious differences, consulting where possible with local community leaders, with parents/carers and with pupils themselves about details. Some general issues relating to school assemblies, school meal provision, uniform, absence regulations and extra-curricular activities are outlined below. They concern all school personnel, including support, administrative and catering staff.

Collective worship

The Education Act 1996 requires schools to arrange a daily act of collective worship. This legislation adds that the act of worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character . Parents/carers, of course, have the

legal right on grounds of conscience to withdraw their children from collective worship in the school.

Where pupils are withdrawn from the daily act of collective worship in response to parental preference it is important for schools to provide appropriate alternative provision for such pupils. This may take the form of a separate act of worship for pupils from a particular faith community if that is thought appropriate. Staff also have the right to withdraw from acts of worship on grounds of conscience. Whatever the religious backgrounds of members of the school community, assemblies can introduce and explain some of the religious beliefs, practices and festivals of the range of faiths present in society. A theme chosen for an assembly that is illustrated with examples from several faiths can help pupils develop a comparative view. Assemblies can also consider the moral dimension of inter-cultural relationships and can counter prejudice and discrimination. Some headteachers of schools with larger numbers of pupils from diverse religious backgrounds find assemblies based on other faiths particularly appropriate, and often involve local religious and community leaders who are usually very willing to advise and assist.

School meals

It is important that schools are sensitive to the relationship between religious beliefs and diet, and do not unintentionally discriminate against some pupils in their school meal arrangements. Schools will recognise that it is very important to ensure that no pupils struggle through

the day on an unbalanced or inadequate diet. Several religions have strict restrictions relating to diet. For example, most Muslims will eat only halal[1] and most Jews only kosher[2] meat. Pork is forbidden to both Muslims and Jews. While it is important not to generalise, in Hinduism vegetarianism is emphasised although practice varies greatly. Beef in particular is avoided.

Schools now provide a regular non-meat option intended to cater for the increasing number of pupils who, for religious and non-religious reasons, are vegetarian. Some pupils, for example Muslims and Jews, though not vegetarian, take the vegetarian option in the absence of food that is halal or kosher.

Providing facilities for eating packed lunches can meet the needs of the strictly religious who may prefer not to eat any food prepared on the school premises.

Fasting

Fasting is a feature of many different faiths. For example, Muslim pupils may fast each day between sunrise and sunset during the month of Ramadan[3]. Secondary-aged pupils in particular are encouraged to practise this aspect of Islam. The provision of a room, other than the dining area, may be required for pupils abstaining from eating and drinking during periods of fasting. In PE lessons less strenuous activities may be more appropriate for pupils who are fasting. Some primary aged pupils may fast during Ramadan although not usually every day.

[1] *See Additional Information*   [3] *See Additional Information*

[2] *See Additional Information*

School uniform

Some groups have religious and cultural requirements relating to dress. For example, Muslims have a strict dress code requiring girls to cover their heads, arms and legs and boys their navel to their knees. With this in mind, school rules will need to take particular account of the need for Muslim girls to cover themselves appropriately for example by wearing long skirts and headscarves.

Religious symbols and jewellery

Some religions require the wearing of religious artefacts. Sikhs are traditionally required to wear a bangle and boys to cover their hair, which is left uncut, secured in a topknot or turban. Some Muslim children wear Qur anic verses around the neck, upper arm or pinned inside clothes. The verses may be wrapped in cloth or contained in small metal boxes/lockets worn on a chain or string.

Some pupils from Chinese backgrounds may wear protective charms, for example a piece of jade, and although not religious artefacts these should not be treated as jewellery. In certain cultures non-religious symbols may be worn. Where safety is an issue, pupils need not be asked to remove the items, but rather asked to tape them to the skin so as to avoid accidents.

Some adornments, for example nose studs worn by girls of Asian background, are jewellery in the strictest sense of the term, but wearing them is often steeped in cultural

tradition and requests to remove them need to be handled sensitively and with consideration.

Daily religious observance and festivals

For many pupils, the opportunity to practise their faith in accordance with certain religious principles is an important aspect of everyday life. For example, some Muslim families may expect their children from the age of puberty to pray at certain times of the day and to wash before doing so. For this reason, schools should provide a space for Muslim pupils who wish to pray at lunchtime and ensure access to washing facilities. Girls and boys pray separately.

The Education Act 1993 confers the legal right to be absent from school for religious observance and the celebration of religious festivals. Schools will wish to avoid arranging major school events on dates of religious significance so as to ensure that all pupils can participate as fully as possible in school life. It is worth remembering that the date of many religious festivals depends on the phases of the moon, for example Easter or Eid ul Fitr[4]. SHAP produces an annual calendar of the main festivals and holy days for many different faiths[5].

Extra-curricular activities

Schools need to be aware that extra-curricular activities and homework clubs after the school day or at weekends may clash with attendance at classes held within the community, for example Bengali or Arabic classes arranged at the local mosque.

Some parents/carers may be reluctant to allow their children to take part in after-school activities and out-of-school visits unless they are reassured about detail-sregarding safety and dietary arrangements.In addition, parents/carers may not wish their children to take part in social activities where girls mix freely with boys.

Careful thought to time-tabling and consultation with parents/carers, via an interpreter where necessary, will help ensure the fullest participation of all pupils in educational and extra-curricular opportunities.

Some curricular considerations

Certain aspects of the curriculum can cause concern for parents/carers and pupils from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Religious education, sex education, art, music, dance, drama and PE are often particular issues. The use of technology (IT) may be an issue for parents/carers with certain beliefs.

Religious education

All pupils are required by law to receive religious education, although parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw their children from such lessons on grounds of conscience. The agreed syllabus for religious education is set locally by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)[6].

[6] *See Additional Information*

Sex education

It is not uncommon for any parent/carer to question the delivery or content of sex education within schools and all parents/carers have the legal right to withdraw their children from any sex education provided by the school.

However, some parents/carers, while not wishing formally to withdraw their children from sex education lessons, nevertheless hold particular views with regard to the content of such lessons. For example, some parents/carers may not object to sex education per se, particularly when delivered within the context of family life and moral considerations. A difficulty may arise, however, when sex education is seen to move from factual knowledge about human development to sexual activity outside marriage. In many religions teaching about contraception is not considered appropriate. Other issues of potential difficulty for many parents/carers include teaching about abortion and homosexuality.

Schools will need to be familiar with the need to respond sensitively to the range of religious and cultural sensibilities relating to this area of the curriculum.

Expressive and performing arts

Some areas of the expressive and performing arts curriculum also involve the need to be aware of particular sensitivities. Within Islam, for example, the study of art involving human images and iconography is specifically prohibited, therefore, some Muslim pupils may not wish to

draw the human figure. Equally, the only music that is universally accepted by all Muslims is the recitation of the Holy Qur an. Many Muslim parents/carers may therefore not wish their children to participate in school music lessons. It is also the case that some expressive forms of dance and drama are likely to be disapproved of by Muslim parents/carers, particularly those that involve public performance, or physical contact between boys and girls.

There are also implications for clothes worn for PE For example, some Muslim girls may need to wear leggings and a long t-shirt for swimming and showering, whereas some Muslim boys may need to wear knee-length swimming trunks. Again, a sensitive school policy signals respect for different customs and beliefs.

With regard to physical education and swimming, schools will need to give due consideration to the provision of single sex lessons, separate changing facilities and individual showering arrangements where practicable.

Home school links

The successful education of all children depends on co-operation, mutual understanding and good communication between the home and the school. With this in mind, it is important to remember that a lack of familiarity with the British education system, as well as with the English language, can cause some parents/ carers to feel particularly isolated from the education

process and inhibit dialogue between home and school. This might also apply to gypsy traveller parents/carers who may be unfamiliar with school routines and procedures.

Parents/carers may also have expectations of schools that are based on a knowledge and experience of other educational systems. In such cases, particular issues such as the role and methods of punishment in school, or the emphasis given to formal teaching may lead to misunderstandings, and undermine effective partnerships.

Schools need to take account of different religious, cultural, linguistic and educational needs when meeting with parents/carers. For example, a Muslim father may not wish to shake hands with a female teacher or a Muslim mother with a male teacher, but some Muslims have no objection to doing so. The important point is to establish with individuals their cultural and religious preferences rather than make assumptions.

Where parents/carers are not fluent in English, schools may need to consider providing access to interpreters and, or to translations of standard letters and other school communications. Schools and Parent Teacher Associations may need to consider the appropriateness of certain social events, such as a wine and cheese evening, or fashion shows that may inadvertently exclude some parents/carers from minority ethnic groups. Within Islam and other faiths, alcohol is prohibited and its presence at

a function may make attendance impossible for some parents/carers. Therefore, schools will wish to ensure events that are sensitive to a range of views and beliefs are organised.

Naming systems

It is very difficult to make categorical statements about the naming conventions adopted by individuals and families. Names may reflect traditional naming systems, British conventions or a combination of both.

Schools will need to ensure that staff correctly pronounce the names of all pupils, bearing in mind that pronunciation of a name may not always be obvious from the spelling. Checking with the family as early as possible will avoid misunderstandings.

Conclusion

While this booklet is intended to help schools identify and celebrate the wide variety of customs, faiths and beliefs within the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual Swansea community, it is also intended to illustrate the fact that people of whatever background are all individuals and ought never to be stereotyped.

Within faith, ethnic or linguistic groups the differences between individuals are far more significant than between the groups themselves, and it is fundamentally important that schools learn about the choices being made by individual pupils, their parents/carers and

their communities, rather than make assumptions on the basis of appearance, ethnicity or language.

It is hoped that this booklet will contribute further to the work being done in schools to develop respect for everyone, and support a culture of learning which values diversity and the experiences of all.

Additional information

Halal

The Arabic word Halal means lawful. When applied to food it means that the product is lawful and permitted in Islam. Pork is prohibited and for other meat to be Halal the animal must be slaughtered according to Islamic rites.

Halal meat

Animals such as cows, sheep, goats, deer, moose, chickens, ducks, game birds, etc, are also Halal, but they must be Zabihah (slaughtered according to Islamic rites) in order to be suitable for consumption. The procedure is as follows:

The animal must be slaughtered by a Muslim. The animal should be put down on the ground (or held if it is small) and its throat should be slit with a very sharp knife to make sure that the three main blood vessels are cut.

While cutting the throat of the animal (without severing it), the person must pronounce the name of Allah, or recite a blessing which contains the name of Allah, such as Bismillah Allah-u-Akbar .

For further information visit: www.eat-halal.com.

Kosher

The Hebrew word Kosher means fit or proper as it relates to dietary (Kosher) laws. It means that a given product is permitted and acceptable within Judaism.

For further information visit www.jewfaq.org

Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar. The month of Ramadan is also when it is believed the Holy Quran was sent down from heaven .

It is during this month that Muslims fast. It is called the Fast of Ramadan and lasts the entire month. It is a time of worship and contemplation.

During the Fast of Ramadan strict restraints are placed on the daily lives of Muslims. They are not allowed to eat or drink during the daylight hours. At the end of the day the fast is broken with prayer and a meal called iftar. In the evening following iftar it is customary for Muslims to go out visiting family and friends. The fast is resumed the next morning.

Eid-Ul-Fitr

Eid-Ul-Fitr is the holiday that follows the month of Ramadan. The breaking of the fast. This is one of the most important dates in the Islamic calendar and certainly the most festive. Eid-ul-Fitr occurs in the morning after the sighting of the new crescent moon on the previous

day/evening. It marks the end of Ramadan, and therefore the completion of a successful month of fasting and a victory for self-discipline. It usually lasts for three days. People must be up before sunrise, bathe and put on new clothes — personal grooming is very important as it symbolises purity. Some women decorate their hands and feet with mehndi patterns in honour of the occasion. Special Eid prayers are said between sunrise and noon. It is traditional for these to take place in the open air, and mosques that have the space may hold the service outside if the weather permits.

Shap

Shap World Religions in Education Journal and Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals booklet and wallchart are available from:

The Shap Working Party,

c/o The National Society s RE Centre

36 Causton Street

London SW1P 4AU

Tel: 0207 932 1194

SACRE

(Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education)

Clerk to the SACRE

Jain Watkins,

School and Governor Unit

Education Department, County Hall, Swansea SA1 3SN

Tel: 01792 636000