

## International School of Cape Town: Religious policy

The International School of Cape Town was established as a Christian Foundation in 1998. The intention of the original founders was to offer an international curriculum, taught in an environment that is shaped and underpinned by universally accepted Biblical values. The intention was that this should not be done to the exclusion of other religions and it is imperative that staff support this from the Christian perspective of understanding, tolerance and respect.

The school's ethos is based on the Christian principle "love your neighbour as yourself". Consequently staff and students are encouraged to apply the following principles in respect of their treatment of other:

Love, kindness, patience, selflessness, joy, loyalty, humility, politeness, forgiveness and tolerance.

### Key Stage 1:

**Daily prayers:** Class teachers are expected to start off each day with a Christian prayer and there will be a short blessing before the start of each break where food is eaten.

**Religious instruction:** Provision has been made for one lesson of Religious Instruction per week. The contents of this lesson will be Christian based and the emphasis should be instruction rather than conversion. Ideally, lessons will highlight a biblical value and this will be illustrated through a bible story.

Any parent wishing to have another religion taught to their child may arrange to do this in the lesson time, subject to availability of teaching space within the school and at their own cost. Alternatively, in discussion with the school, parents are free to make alternative arrangements for what their children cover and do during Religious Instruction lessons.

**Religious festivals:** The school welcomes input from other religions. We consider it part of the school's ethos to respect other religions and we therefore believe it to be part of the educational process to enlighten all our students regarding the significance of festivals and observances of all these religions. Consequently the school acknowledges significant non Christian events such as Ramadaan, Eid, Diwali, Yom Kippur.

### Key Stage 2:

**Religious instruction:** Provision has been made within the timetable for one lesson of Religious Instruction per week in year 3 and 4, and one lesson of Religious Instruction per fortnight in year 5 and 6. The contents of this lesson will be Christian based and the emphasis is instruction rather than conversion. These lessons are used to stimulate discussions that will highlight a biblical value and this, ideally, will be illustrated through a bible story.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from these lessons should do so in consultation with the child's teacher and Key stage Head.

**Assemblies:** Key stage 2 assemblies are mostly based around a biblical value. The hymn has a religious theme and the assembly is closed with a prayer.

The school welcomes input from other religions. We consider it part of the school's ethos to respect other religions and we therefore believe it to be part of the educational process to enlighten all our students regarding the significance of festivals and observances of all religions when they arise, such as Diwali, Eid, Yom Kippur etc. These festivals will be presented by the year 6 Outreach and Cultural Committee.

### **High School:**

While there is no Religious Instruction lesson per se in the High School timetable, religious tolerance and education is taught as part of the PSHE (Physical, Social and Health Education). Assemblies are held twice a week and these should generally adopt a Christian message, although this is not obligatory. In addition, important non-Christian religious events will be acknowledged and accommodated.

Prize giving ceremonies at the end of the year will include readings from the Bible and a prayer. The Year 12 Valedictory services are held in a church and follow a Christian structure. All students are expected to attend these events.

Last updated: February 2016.

\*Please also refer to **Assembly policy**