



Name of Policy: Religious Policy	In Section 1: General Guidelines	Last updated by: SMT
Cross references in the following sections:		Date of most recent update: April 2021

## 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 Christian values. The intention was that this should never be done to the exclusion of other religions and it is imperative that staff support this from the perspective of understanding, tolerance and respect.

**Christian Ethos - 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 with respect to their treatment of others:**

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

**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 religious events such as Christmas, Diwali, Easter, Eid, Passover, Ramadan, Yom Kippur and Vesak Day.

**Religious Obligations:** Any child needing to leave the school or miss school for religious purposes is asked to notify their Key Stage Head and their class teacher or tutor. Students will not be marked absent for these occasions and will be supported by the school in their request. Students required to wear religious clothing or ornaments are permitted to do so. However, any clothing must be in our school colours.

### Early Years and Key Stage 1:

Through our life orientation programme Marvellous Me the children learn about different cultures and religious celebrations and beliefs. Our Marvellous Me programme focuses on the core values of Trustworthiness, Effort, Respect, Responsibility, Initiative, Fairness, Independence and caring/citizenship. It is underpinned by Kindness, Respect and Gratitude. The children give thanks before eating their snacks. This is not a prayer but rather an expression of gratitude.



**Assemblies:** They are based around a core value. This will depend on what the children are engaging with in their classrooms based on our Marvellous Me programme. When appropriate, the assembly is closed with a prayer.

**End of Year Events:** The children perform a Christmas concert. This may be a nativity concert.

### **Key Stage 2:**

**Assemblies:** Key stage 2 assemblies are mostly based around a school value, or religious or cultural holiday celebrated by members of our school community. They may also be linked to a PSHE topic or celebrating the classroom learning from the term. When appropriate, the assembly is closed with a prayer.

**End of Year Events:** The children perform a Christmas concert. This may be a nativity concert. Prize giving ceremonies at the end of the year will include readings from a chosen text and a prayer. Any Biblical texts are chosen with universally accepted themes and messages.

### **High School:**

Religious tolerance is taught as part of the PSHE (Physical, Social and Health Education) curriculum. Assemblies are held once a week and these generally focus on current events, religious or cultural holidays celebrated by members of our school community or one of our school values.

Assemblies end either with a prayer or a reading. Students and staff are invited to participate in the prayer if they so desire.

Prize giving ceremonies at the end of the year will include readings from a chosen text and a prayer. Any Biblical texts that are chosen with universally accepted themes and messages. The Year 12 Valedictory services are held in a church and follow a formal structure. All students are expected to attend these events.

### **Staff Meetings:**

Staff meetings at the start of each term will begin with a prayer.