



## Arun Court School: policy Number 6E

**Arun Court School – Anti-Religious Intolerance Policy – last updated January 2021**

**Ratified by main EMAT meeting: .....**

**Signature (+ date) Chair of EMAT: ..... Mr Paul Phillips**

**Signature (+ date) Proprietor: .....Mrs Beverley-Sarah White**

**Signature (+ date) Principal of School .....Vicki Williams**

**Date of next review: January 2022 (Reviewed annually)**

**This policy is part of a suite of anti-discrimination policies and they should be read in unison**

### Context

70% of 16- to 29-year-olds in the **UK** say they have no **religion** and 59% say they never attend a **religious** service. Source: European Social Survey. Many of our young people with ASD really struggle to understand those within our community who have a faith, and due to social anxiety, can sometimes express their views in a way that could be seen as offensive. This is therefore a really relevant and important topic for us. How can we support those in our community who have a faith to feel able to talk about it? How can we support those without a faith to argue their points in a way that lets them express their view but is not offensive to others? How can we ensure that we teach the Surrey Agreed syllabus but in a way that is relevant to our families and builds tolerance and understanding in the wider community?

**Family data (correct at time of print 2021 Jan) shows that within our schol we have small student numbers who identify as coming from faith families – catholic/Jewish Christian Muslim Hindu.**

**We also have a small number who identify as practising pagan.**

### Our Position on Faith in Schools

Arun Court School teaches the Surrey Agreed Syllabus, but attempts to alter the planning so it is relevant to the life experiences of our students and to make best use of the local religious communities near us. As a school with a Nordic foundation we would prefer to see a UK education system with more focus on philosophy, but we work within the system that exists. We are determined that our students understand the Christian heritage of the UK, and the core beliefs of the religions within our multi-cultural society in order to better understand key aspects such as why people wear what they wear, do what they do and have a set or moral codes. We however also want to nurture discussion about ‘big issues’ and the help the majority of our young people who do not have any faith to feel that they also have a recognised moral code and ‘belief’ system and spirituality within their own position.

## What is religious intolerance?

Religious intolerance can occur against any faith group, however in recent years two forms of specific religious intolerance have escalated in prevalence within the UK. At Arun Court school we focus on respect for everyone, and developing a personal sense of spirituality and 'self'. However we need to also challenge all religious intolerance, and these two items specifically, in order for our young people to be aware of the current issues the world faces.

Religious intolerance can take many forms:

Being rude, offensive or bullying about what a person wears, believes or does as part of religious practice

Being purposefully disrespectful of beliefs through actions – such as placing bacon on the door of a muslim – which constitutes an assault

Being physically abusive to people because of their religion - assault

Discriminatory practices

Making comments about fundamentalist attitudes and branding all members of a faith groups as holding those views or being responsible for atrocities

Saying people of a certain faith group are like animals, are not human or deserve to die

Making offensive jokes about past atrocities (such as the Holocaust)

In a worse case scenario in a world context ethnic/ religious cleansing

## What is not religious intolerance?

Expressing a difference of opinion in a polite and measured way is not religious intolerance.

## What is Islamophobia?



The UK is full of people who follow lots of different faiths and religions.

Most of the time they all get along and people are free to live the way they want to.

However, some groups are targeted because of their beliefs, and because of events that people blame them for - even if this is incorrect.

Islamophobia is when Muslims are the victims of attacks just because of their religion.

It is something that worries a lot of people.

(Age-appropriate definition from BBC Newsround)

## What is Anti-Semitism?



Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

(Gov.UK definition)

## What do we do within our curriculum?

- Promote British values and a multi-cultural heritage, including valuing those of an atheist, agnostic, humanist and pagan tradition
- Teach RE in a contextual and relevant way
- Visit faith communities and discuss their beliefs and practices
- Value our whole community – model and encourage debate that is intellectual and polite
- Discuss news stories in a balanced and non-inflammatory way
- Actively challenge fake news by encouraging students to think about their sources of information and guiding them towards reputable sources
- Celebrate difference
- Ensure resources cover a wide range of belief systems and cultures
- Encourage an exploration of self, and a sense of awe, wonder and spirituality through meditation, mindfulness and holistic connection with nature



( Aldershot Buddhist Centre )

### **What happens if someone engages in discriminatory behaviour?**

The incident is written up as a serious incident within the incidents folder. It is reported to the authorities (police) if it meets the threshold. If staff are unsure whether it meets a threshold, they should contact the Surrey LADO for advice.

Parents of both the perpetrator and the victim are informed.

The victim will receive support such as counselling, confidence boosting sessions and a holistic space in which to relate and explore their feelings. If they wish to discuss their feelings with the perpetrator, and the school feels this would be beneficial, they may be able to do so in a safe and facilitated meeting.

The perpetrator will be asked to carry out a series of lessons around changing the root causes of their behaviour and may also be placed on a behaviour plan. Repeated actions may lead to us feeling we can't meet need and the student carrying out only online learning whilst a suitable alternative provision is found. The needs of the victim must be given priority.

All incidents of this nature are reported annually to the DFE / LEA

Cases are always discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Leaders as behaviours of this nature can be an indicator of difficulties at home and other concerns

### **What happens if a staff member or EMAT member engages in discriminatory behaviour?**

They would be dealt with under the staff grievance and disciplinary policy. Where a criminal action is believed to have taken place they will be reported to the police. They risk dismissal and being reported as unfit to work with young people to the relevant authorities.

## **MONITORING OF THIS POLICY**

This policy is ratified by full EMAT meeting and is reviewed Annually.

This policy is constantly monitored on the ground by the DSL Team, Well-being Team and the SLT. Discrimination is a safeguarding issue first and foremost, the Chair of EMAT and all safeguarding EMAT members should monitor this aspect to a high degree on their visits. The Proprietor / Executive Head also monitors the use of this policy.

All staff have a responsibility to monitor their own practice and ensure they are following policies. They risk disciplinary action if policy is not followed. They risk criminal prosecution if their actions, as a result of not following policy, endangers the welfare of a child