

DISCIPLINE

Bahá'ís recognize the authority of the teacher *in loco parentis*.

- Should discipline problems arise, parents would welcome the opportunity to consult with teachers and school staff to agree ways to correct undesirable behaviour
- The Bahá'í view is that the 'twin pillars' for the education of children are sanction and reward.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Bahá'ís are committed to the religious content in school education, embracing collective worship, spiritual and ethical education and the study of the world's faiths.

- As reflected in the QDCA's non-statutory guidance, the study of religions including Christianity is preferable
- Bahá'ís are discouraged from portraying the Founders of religions themselves in art or drama. Parents may be happy to discuss alternative approaches for RE lessons if necessary.

ATTITUDES TO EDUCATION

- Bahá'u'lláh taught that education should be compulsory for all children.
- Worldwide, all children should learn the skills of literacy, numeracy, science, arts and crafts.
- Great emphasis should also be put on the development of virtues such as honesty, trustworthiness and the elimination of all kinds of prejudice. Parents will support PSHE and Citizenship programmes.
- Since Bahá'ís are committed to the oneness of humanity, parents will also be highly supportive of multicultural education and world studies.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Bahá'í Religious Education Agency

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The Pastoral Care of Bahá'í Children in English schools



Information for Teachers
This leaflet may be photocopied
as necessary

INTRODUCTION

The Bahá'í Faith is an independent world religion. It is not an offshoot or sect of any other religion, but stands with its own Holy texts revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder, by Almighty God.

Oneness of God

Fundamental to the Bahá'í Faith is the belief in the oneness of God, the essential oneness of all religions, and in the oneness of humanity.

- Bahá'u'lláh taught that divine revelation is not final or absolute but progressive, evolving from age to age like humanity itself.
- Bahá'ís therefore give reverence to the past Prophets, including Moses, Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Christ and Muhammad.
- Each of these "Manifestations of God" appeared at a time when humanity was in particular need of spiritual guidance.
- Each re-stated the basic spiritual truths whilst bringing social teaching fit for the age in which they were revealed.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Worship

Bahá'ís meet for community worship in each other's homes, community halls or Bahá'í Centres where such a facility exists. A 'Feast' is held every 19 days, and all Bahá'ís are encouraged to attend this spiritual, administrative and social event.

There are no specific rituals to Bahá'í worship, and the cultural traditions of the local community often influence the social part of the Feast.

On the nine main Holy Days, Bahá'ís are encouraged to refrain from work and study when possible. Some parents may ask that their child be given an Authorised Absence mark for religious observance on these days. (In practice, less than half of these days will fall on school days in any one year.)

The Bahá'í Holy Days are as follows:

21 March	-	Naw Ruz (New Year)
29 April	-	Ninth day of Ridvan
2 May	-	Twelfth day of Ridvan
23 May	-	Declaration of the Báb
29 May	-	Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh
9 July	-	Martyrdom of the Báb
20 October	-	Birth of the Báb
12 November	-	Birth of Bahá'u'lláh

Prayer

Bahá'ís are encouraged to pray daily. Bahá'ís use a variety of prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh. From the age of 15, certain daily prayers are obligatory, but these should not disrupt school life, as the range of time in which to say them is broad.

Fasting

From the age of 15, Bahá'ís take part in the 19 day fast from sunrise to sunset, 2-20 March. This involves complete abstinence from food and drink. Prayer and meditation are emphasised, making the fast essentially spiritual in character. Those who are ill, weak, or elderly are exempt, as are women when menstruating, pregnant or nursing.

Diet

There are no specific dietary restrictions for Bahá'ís, although the use of alcohol or habit-forming drugs is forbidden. Smoking is strongly discouraged.

Clothing

Bahá'ís have no clothing restrictions or requirements, though decency is encouraged at all times.

Relationship Education

Most parents would support responsible, sensitive sex education which places sex within the context of family life.